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IL: *The prospect of the PRC becoming a big oil exporter makes it an even more formidable potential Power in the region.*

The PRC as an Oil Exporter

Yuan-li Wu

AS a result of the 1973 oil crisis and worldwide interest in alternative sources of supply to OPEC, it is not surprising that reports of ge increases in oil production in the People's public of China have caught people's imagination. 1973, one million metric tons(1) of Chinese crude were exported to Japan, largest buyer of Chinese so far. The volume rose to 4 million tons in 1974 l 8 million tons in 1975(2). At over US$10 a rel, this means more than US$70 a ton or US$560 lion for 8 million tons. Although the amount is large by today's standards of inflated currencies, s nevertheless an enviable amount, especially in eyes of large oil-importing countries such as an or of some small and poor developing nations t must resort to extraordinary means to pay for orted oil. Reports of huge potentials offshore — to 15 billion tons according to one JETRO ort(3), half of which is considered exploitable — r and above onshore reserves estimated at 7.5 ion tons with 4.5 billion exploitable further add he attraction of Chinese oil.

Since the PRC already is the most populous ion in the world, its potential as an Asian mmunist Power with a developing nuclear arsenal greatly magnified by the prospect of its becoming arge oil exporter as well. Those who desire to use ing as a counterweight against the Soviet Union l an oil-rich China even more useful than before. ose nations that fear or are suspicious of China ause of its greater capability and size in compari- with their own, not to mention Chinese verbal, even physical, militancy, now have even more son to feel uneasy. Since all these developments e taken place after the collapse of US efforts in o-China, the possibility of an enlarged role for Peking in East and South-east Asia may appear rather realistic. As a matter of fact, while Peking has approached several of its smaller neighbours (e.g., Thailand, the Philippines and Hong Kong) with offers of oil, it is not a little puzzling that it has not made an even greater effort to exploit its oil weapon.

What indeed are are the prospects for Chinese oil? Can mainland China really become as important an oil producer and exporter as Saudi Arabia or Iran in the foreseeable future?

* * * * * * *

VARIOUS speculations about the prospects of Chinese oil export have been advanced by diverse sources, including China watchers in Western countries, business interests in oil-importing countries looking for supply outside OPEC, and official spokesmen from Peking and their sympathizers. Take the year 1980, for instance. Some American China watchers have advanced projections for Chinese production and domestic consumption based on estimated 1971-74 growth rates that would yield an exportable surplus of 50 million tons of crude oil(4). Other similar projections have suggested an export potential of 27 to 33 million tons for the same year. Japanese estimates published in JETRO's *China Newsletter* in April 1975 have advanced alternative export projections of 30 to 50 million tons of energy products in oil equivalent which effectively bracket the above US estimates(5). These figures can also be compared with even more optimistic speculations about 1980 made by Japanese oil importers in 1974(6), varyingly quoted first at 100 million tons and, later, at 60 million tons. One enthusiastic US professor, upon his return from a China visit,

reportedly speculated(7) that the PRC might be able to export 1-1.5 billioin barrels of crude oil in 1980 — that is, 143 to 214 million tons at an average of 7 barrels per ton.

These projections, as well as many others not cited here, are of two kinds. Some are sheer speculations based on reports of recent large advances in PRC crude oil production, boosted by even rosier speculations about potential reserves offshore. To some extent these speculations have been coloured by perceptions of self-interest on the part either of Peking and its supporters or of those who wish to import Chinese oil or are negotiating with oil exporters elsewhere. The second group of estimates consists of analytical derivations based on varying assumptions about future Chinese crude oil production and domestic consumption. If we accept the approximate production of 65.3 million metric tons for 1974, which most of these analysts use, and a domestic consumption of about 60 million tons, then the plausibility of any specific projection about the future would hinge on how realistic the assumptions about the determinants of future Chinese oil production and consumption turn out to be. In order to arrive at realistic assumptions, we need to understand the nature of the choices PRC policy makers must make and what criteria they might employ in making their choice. One way to gain such an understanding of the most strategic factors is to go through each step of a particular projection. This we propose to do in the next three sections.

* * * * * * *

THE exercise we are about to embark upon below will yield an exportable surplus of 45 to 49 million tons of crude oil in 1980. The figure is very close to some of the higher estimates US and Japanese China watchers have advanced. Discussion on its plausibility will follow.

Let us approach our task by first addressing the question of the PRC's future domestic demand for energy resources. Among the primary energy resources included are coal, natural gas, hydro-electric power, and petroleum; other energy sources such as fuel wood, solar power and, for the near future, even nuclear power are excluded because they are either quantitatively insignificant for the present or are faced with severe limitations for technological reasons. (For example, fuel wood can be used primarily only for household heating in certain localities in China where it is available in quantity.) As the national output increases, the demand for energy resources both as fuel and as raw materials will increase. By the same token, if the supply of energy resources for domestic use is curtailed through export, future GNP growth will be adversely affected unless the potential short-fall of energy in the production of goods for purposes other than private personal consumption can be made up by curtailment of energy use for personal consumption.

Hence, for projection purposes, the two factors involved at this point are (a) the GNP gro rate that one might reasonably expect to see availability of energy is not a constraining factor a (b) the relationship between GNP growth and ene requirement. For the latter a convenient indicato the ratio of the growth rate of energy consumpt to that of GNP. This "co-efficient of income (i GNP) elasticity" of energy requirement or consur tion gives us the per cent rate of growth of ene resources required for every one per cent increase GNP.

Because of serious fluctuations in Chi economic development since 1949, the annual gro rate of the Chinese GNP as estimated by West sources varies in accordance with the time per examined. For example, an annual growth rate 5.6 per cent for the 1953-54 period is given in 1975 Joint Economic Committee publication(8). H ever, if the period of steady growth under the F Five Year Plan is omitted, the annual rate 1958-74 would drop to 5.2 per cent. Alternativ the average rate would dip further to 4.5 per cen year during 1958-65, a period that includes both sharp decline after the failure of the Great L Forward (1958-59) and the recovery that follow On the other hand, the rate would rise to 6 per c a year during the 1966-70 period. For 1971-74 would be 5.6 per cent a year, the same as 1953-74. In general, it appears that the range these average values during historically signific periods lies between 4.5 per cent and 6 per cent. the purpose of our present exercise, let us assu therefore that the Chinese GNP can rise steadily a per cent a year, a moderately optimistic figure.

As for future energy consumption, what need at this stage is an appropriate value for "income elasticity of requirement or demand" energy that can be applied to the GNP se projected at 6 per cent annual growth. Three st are taken in succession. First, we take the estima of the annual growth of energy production, in ter of "coal equivalent"(9), in different periods. Seco we divide these figures by the corresponding ann GNP growth rates. Lastly, we make the assumpt that domestic energy consumption grew during past at rates approximating to those of ene production because exports and imports were s negligible in relation to domestic production, es cially in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a inventory change can be disregarded as an appro mation. The result of dividing the annual ene production rate by the corresponding GNP gro rate is found in Table 1 (see overleaf).

Since 1.55 is the figure for the latest per (1971-74) and since it is also very close to that of preceding five years, we shall adopt it for

Table 1

Income Elasticity of Energy Requirement (Annual Rates of Growth in Percent)

	I GNP	II (10) Energy Production	III Income Elasticity of Energy Requirement
1958-65	4.5	9.3	2.06
1966-70	6.0	9.1	1.52
1971-74	5.6	8.7	1.55
1958-74	5.2	9.1	1.75

resent exercise. To repeat, what this figure means is hat for every one per cent increase in GNP there ill be a 1.55 per cent increase in domestic energy onsumption. Consequently, if GNP grows at 6 per ent a year, energy consumption would grow at 9.3 er cent a year. Conversely, if the availability of nergy should fall short of this level, **other things eing equal,** GNP growth would have to be educed.

Table 2 (see below) presents the index series of NP growth projected at 6 per cent a year (1974 = 00), the corresponding series of energy requirement nd, in the third column, the energy requirement or nsumption series in million tons of coal equivalent, eginning with 380 million tons as the estimated nsumption of energy in 1974.

Finally, the last column presents the estimates energy production that must be available in order meet the consumption requirement after allowing r waste and loss during handling and transmission. The latter allowance has been estimated by US analysts at 8 per cent of production. Some small changes in inventory and military use of energy may also be absorbed here.

* * * * * * *

GIVEN the claim the domestic economy makes on all energy resources, how can we decompose this into requirement for oil. Obviously, the more the overall demand is met by other energy sources, the smaller would be the remainder to be met by oil. In this connection, we need to bear in mind that although China is still a coal-burning country because of the size of its coal reserves and the wide occurrence of coal deposits, many of the large coal mines are no longer as productive as before and new mines of smaller size have had to be developed in recent years. Hence the potential offered by using more other energy resources in the domestic economy — mainly coal in the short run — in order to conserve oil will be limited. Instead there has been some conversion of power plants and railway transportation from coal to oil burning. Hence it is plausible to assume that consumption of all energy resources other than oil will be at the maximum level of their production. Therefore, the amount of oil required to meet domestic consumption can be estimated as a remainder by subtracting from the total domestic energy requirement (Column IV in the last table or Column I in Table 3 [see over]) the estimated production of non-oil energy resources.

To do so, we shall begin with the estimated production of non-oil energy resources in the 1974 base year (330 million tons of coal equivalent[11]) and project future growth at an appropriate annual growth rate. For the present exercise the rate of six per cent a year will be used. This is the rate of

Table 2

Estimate of Domestic Energy Requirement

	Projected GNP Index at 6% Annual Growth	Domestic Energy Consumption Requirement		Energy Production Required to Meet Domestic Consumption*
		Index	Million Metric Tons of Coal Equivalent	Million Metric Tons of Coal Equivalent
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)
1974	100.0	100.0	380.0	413.0
1975	106.0	109.3	415.3	451.5
1976	112.4	119.2	452.8	492.2
1977	119.1	129.6	492.5	535.4
1978	126.2	140.7	534.6	581.1
1979	133.8	152.4	579.2	629.6
1980	141.8	164.9	626.5	681.0

olumn III + .92.

growth of GNP we have employed thus far. It also happens to equal the average rate of growth of coal, natural gas, and hydro-electric power, weighted by their percentage shares in total energy production(12).

* * * * * * *

WE ARE now in a position to estimate the exportable surplus of oil by subtracting the volume of crude oil required to meet domestic consumption (Column IV in Table 3 or Column II in Table 4 (see over) from the estimated total oil production. The latter can be obtained by applying any plausible annual growth rate to the 1974 base year estimate of 65.3 million metric tons. In the following we have adopted as a first approximation in our present exercise a 20 per cent annual growth rate. This rate has been mentioned by various recent Japanese visitors to Peking in the continuing bilateral oil negotiations. The outcome of this calculation yields a gross surplus of 10 million tons of crude oil for 1974 and 53 million tons in 1980. After deducting waste in handling etc., at 8 per cent the exportable surplus becomes 9.2 million tons for 1974 and 49 million tons for 1980.

Not all the exportable surplus may actually be exported. First, the domestic consumption estimates derived in the earlier steps of our exercise have not allowed for any large increase in inventory. Under the call for defence preparations against potential Soviet attack, the PRC has in recent years tried to increase its food and fuel stocks. Since Peking's policy is to hold decentralized stocks, there may be a tendency to increase the aggregate volume of stocks held over and above what would otherwise be the normal level. Hence greater additions to inventory may be necessary. If the initial inventory in 1973 already at the desired level, then the greater addi to inventory in 1974 should apply to the increm in consumption in 1974 over the 1973 level. *Mut mutandis*, the same would apply to subsequent ye

The increase in oil production in 1974 that of 1973 was approximately 10 million tons. corresponding increase in domestic consumption be put at perhaps 9 million tons. If Pek maintains an additional 90-day stock for spe contingencies, the increase in inventory during 1 should equal one-fourth of 9 million tons, or 2 million tons. This would give us a net exporta surplus of 6.9 million tons for 1974 and 44.6 mil tons in 1980. Since inventory change is somew flexible, the amount available for export of current production of any given year could well between the gross and net exportable surplus mates.

During 1974 the PRC's crude oil exp included 4 million tons to Japan, one-quarter mil tons to the Philippines, 200,000 tons to Hong K and 1.5 million tons to North Vietnam and Ko Altogether about 6 million tons were exported. figure can be compared with the net exporta surplus shown in Column VI of Table 4. The that it is remarkably close to the 6.9 million figure (excluding military use not covered in th per cent "waste" allowance) is not entirely surpri since the original estimate of domestic consump requirement of all energy products in terms of equivalent developed by US analysts which we h employed may well have been affected by t estimate of domestic supply of which the estima export was a determining factor. However, it c not follow that the net exportable surplus estim

Table 3

Estimate of Domestic Requirement of Crude Oil

	Energy Production Required to Meet Domestic Consumption	Production of Energy Resources other than Oil	Oil Production Required to Meet Domestic Consumption	Oil Production Required to Meet Domestic Consumption in Million Tons of Oil	Implied Annual Rat of Growth o Domestic Oi Requiremen
		(Million Metric Tons)			(in per cen Preceding Year = 100
	(I)	(II)	(III = I-II)	(IV = III + 1.5)	
1974	413.0	330.0	83 (13)	55.3	—
1975	451.5	349.8	101.7	67.8	22.6
1976	492.2	370.8	121.4	80.9	19.3
1977	535.4	393.0	142.4	94.9	17.3
1978	581.1	416.6	164.5	109.7	15.6
1979	629.6	441.6	188.0	125.3	14.2
1980	681.0	468.1	212.9	141.9	13.2

for the subsequent years are already implied in the methodology or will necessarily be correct. The long estimating process through which we have led the patient reader has brought to light some of the key "policy variables" which we shall discuss below.

* * * * * * *

IN THE first place, how much energy resources will be required either as fuel or as raw materials depends upon the technology employed and the types of products that make up the GNP. We have already noted certain variations in the ratio of energy consumption to the GNP growth rate in different periods of the PRC's past economic development. An "income elasticity of energy requirements" of 1.55 is not the highest during past periods. On the other hand, it also is by no means the lowest possible figure. Greater efficiency in energy consumption would reduce this co-efficient, thereby reducing the total volume of energy requirement as the GNP increases(14).

In the case of mainland China, consumption of energy for personal use is very low. Visitors to Peking have noted the absence of automobile traffic even in the capital. We are also aware of the dimly lit Chinese homes and the widespread use of cotton-padded garments in lieu of heated rooms in the winter. Thus, there is very little room for energy conservation through reduction of personal consumption. Any reduction of oil consumption through conservation must be sought in improvements of efficiency in either transportation or the industrial sector. Within the industrial sector, there may be some room for improvement in the use of natural gas in Szechwan. However, this is offset by the expected expansion of production of chemical fertilizes, synthetic fibers and plastics, as indicated by China'a importation of a substantial number of such plants in recent years. Some of these plants have not yet been installed and, if Peking is true to form, they undoubtedly will be supplemented by domestic copies of the same. On balance one should, therefore, expect a net increase in energy-using products in the composition of the PRC's GNP in the future.

An important factor affecting the level of energy consumption in producing the national output is the location of new industry and Peking's policy toward the development of its interior provinces. If we examine the gradual shift in industrial location during the past 25 years, we can detect a slow but sure movement from the eastern seaboard to the central third of the country. During the last decade the location of new Chinese industrial undertakings has manifested an increasing emphasis on the central and south-western provinces (e.g., Hupeh, Hunan, Szechwan, Yunnan and Kweichow) all of which are on the western border of the central third of the country. The most recently completed long-distance railway lines are mostly located in the south-western provinces of Szechwan, Yunnan and Kweichow. We should therefore expect an increase in the average length of haul in railway freight traffic, together with an expansion of truck traffic in these areas. These developments will increase the fuel content per unit of output produced. In addition, the beginning of construction of a new railway from Tsinghai to Tibet will add further to this trend. This locational aspect of industrial development is clearly related to Chinese defence considerations. How important the defence factor will be in the near future is of course mainly a function of Sino-Soviet relations.

* * * * * * *

Table 4

Estimate of the Exportable Surplus of Crude Oil
(Million Metric Tons)

	I Oil Production	II Volume required for Domestic Consumption	III (I-II)	IV Gross Exportable Surplus (92% of III)	V Addition to Inventory*	VI Net Exportable Surplus (IV-III)
1974	65.3	55.3	10.0	9.2	2.3	6.9
1975	78.4	67.8	10.6	9.7	3.1	6.6
1976	94.0	80.9	13.1	12.1	3.3	8.8
1977	112.8	94.9	17.9	16.5	3.5	13.0
1978	135.4	109.7	25.7	23.7	3.7	20.0
1979	162.5	125.3	37.2	34.2	3.9	30.3
1980	195.0	141.9	53.1	48.8	4.2	44.6

* Addition to inventory is calculated at one fourth of the increase in domestic consumption over preceding year.

IN ORDER to increase oil production it will obviously be necessary to expand existing oil fields and to develop new fields. The capital investment necessary for this purpose is a part of the total capital formation of the country. The author of the article on Chinese petroleum published in the 1975 Joint Economic Committee report speculated that, without allowing for the need to offset declining output of older wells, investment in the petroleum industry in 1971-76 might amount to 6 per cent of the country's estimated total investment(15), which would not be particularly onerous. A very important assumption of this estimate, however, is that for every ton of annual crude oil production an investment of only 100 yuan will be needed. This is only one fifth of a much higher incremental capital-output ratio calculated for the 1950s by another economist(16). If one were to employ the alternative higher figure of 500 yuan in new capital investment per ton of incremental crude oil output, the same investment would have to be raised to 30 per cent of total capital formation. Bearing in mind that the requirement for additional oil in domestic consumption is partly governed by the rate at which production of other energy resources can expand, investment in both new and old oil fields will be in direct competition with investment in other energy production facilities, especially the coal mines.

In particular, the amount of new investment required to produce more oil will depend upon the geological conditions of the fields and their geographical location. Therefore, any effort to develop new oil fields in interior provinces where transportation and other facilities are less adequate is bound to require greater concomitant, if not prior, investment in the economic infrastructure than development of existing oil fields in Manchuria or North China around the Pohai Gulf. The same is true for investment in offshore oil which will face additional technical problems(17). From the point of view of low investment cost and the equally important consideration of time lag between investment and production, development of onshore fields in Manchuria and on both sides of the Pohai Gulf is definitely preferable to development offshore or far inland. Offshore development will pose additional problems from the point of view of security of these new installations. Investment in naval defence craft for patrolling coastal waters may be regarded as a particular form of investment in the infrastructure. From Peking's point of view, even the onshore fields in Manchuria and North China are still far too close to the Soviet Union and are too accessible to the Soviet Navy. In the longer run, it would be better strategically to develop new oil fields in central and western China. In the short run, the much larger initial capital investment required for oil in the interior provinces would militate against this choice. For the moment, precisely because of the dilemma presented by these considerations, Peking may find it wise not to over commit the country's limited capital resources to oil development in Manchuria and on the eastern seaboard.

How Chinese long-term investment decisions will be made will be affected very decisively by the outcome of the continuing struggle for leadership in Peking with an eye on the post-Mao period. As long as this outcome is uncertain, Peking will be unable and unwilling to make irrevocable decisions on the future course of the country's economic development including the location of its new oil fields and other industries. One of the indirect causes is uncertainty in Peking's relations with the Soviet Union and the United States.

Under these conditions the most likely policy is to try to keep as many options open as possible and to stay on existing paths of development. This would imply relatively greater emphasis on onshore fields on the coast and in Manchuria but it will also imply a certain degree of continuing exploration offshore and of exploration and development of the inland fields. However, if primary emphasis continues to be placed on existing fields, especially at Ta-ch'ing in northern Manchuria, the rate of expansion of production may no longer be able to stay at the 20 per cent a year level for long. A main factor in this respect is whether expansion of production at the newer fields — for instance, Ta-kang and Shengli on the Pohai Gulf — will be able to offset a possible slow down in expansion at Ta-ch'ing.

Finally, if, for any reason, investment in oil expansion should result in robbing investment in other sectors, the rate of GNP growth may have to be slowed. This would perhaps have the "salutory effect" of lowering domestic consumption of energy products, thus making more oil available for export. However, it would raise for Peking the more fundamental question of whether it is worthwhile exporting oil at all.

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OIL export by Peking, like all other exports, is meant to provide means of payment for imports. Therefore, the determining factors are the total quantity of imports required and the terms of trade between imports and exports. Given the capacity of its crude oil production — that is assuming that all necessary investment decisions to develop the capacity have already been made — Peking will still have to decide whether the oil produced should be exported or used in producing import substitutes. Furthermore, if oil is to be exported, a choice will still have to be made between export of crude oil and that of refined products. Peking is in favour of a high oil price but it is against high prices for industrial products which it wishes to import. Recent large Chinese purchases of fertilizer and synthetic fibre plants suggest that

Peking hopes to reduce import of these high energy consuming industrial products. More fertilizer and synthetic fibres will be produced in order to increase grain output, lower grain and fertilizer import, increase textile export, and possibly reduce domestic cotton production in order to free land for grain. However, for the foreseeable future, Peking will have to maintain a higher rate of its import of industrial equipment, if not to expand that rate.

Therefore, in this respect Peking is in sympathy with the sentiments of the OPEC countries. As long as Chinese oil export remains relatively small in comparison with total OPEC export — and this certainly will be the case in the foreseeable future — China stands a chance to benefit from the cartel's high oil price without contributing noticeably to the potential destabilization of the cartel. However, in so far as Chinese oil receipts are concerned, much depends upon competition of other oil exporters who are anxious to maintain their own oil receipts out of balance of payments considerations. In particular, Ta-ch'ing oil has been in competition with Indonesian oil on the Japanese market and some slippage in price occurred between 1974 and 1975. The net exportable surplus of oil in the exercise we went through earlier amounted to annual increases of up to 50 per cent a year. Yet a drop of US$2.00 per barrel (from US$10.00 to US$8.00) would effectively reduce the 50 per cent increase in oil export to only a 20 per cent increase in receipts. On the other hand, how fast industrial equipment will rise in price will depend upon the rate of the world's economic recovery as well as that of price inflation. It is not inconceivable that the potential benefit of expanded oil export could be largely dissipated through unfavourable developments in the terms of trade, not to mention any shrinkage of the world's demand for Chinese exports other than oil. During 1974, the PRC's trade deficit vis-à-vis Japan actually increased substantially in spite of its first large oil export to Japan. The impact of such a potentially adverse development is bound to magnify the problems of policy choice and investment decisions outlined earlier.

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THE preceding observations by no means imply that Peking cannot employ oil export as a political instrument in dealing with other countries. In the first place, in negotiations with its smaller neighbours Peking can always offer to export small quantities of oil at concession prices in return for political advantages. This is true especially if the other party has balance of payments difficulties and is psychologically weakened by fears of a sudden oil shortage and/or price hike. In dealing with larger importing nations such as Japan the most that Peking can export in the foreseeable future will still be insufficient to assure a secure supply for the latter. For instance, even an export of 50 million tons would be no more than one eighth of a total import of 400 million tons which Japan will probably be importing soon. Unless Japan is faced with another embargo by other oil producers, Chinese export of such a magnitude would not be sufficient to give Peking a decisive leverage over Japan.

This is of course not true for individual Japanese oil importers. In contradistinction to Japan as a whole, it is always possible for Peking to try to exercise political influence through individual interest groups in Japan or any other adjacent country. From the point of view of Japan as a nation, the political advantage of buying Chinese oil and of magnifying the potential of the Chinese source of supply lies in the impact Japan may hope to see on other potential oil suppliers. This was particularly the case during the period of active negotiations between Tokyo and Moscow in 1973-74 on the development of Tyumen deposits with Japanese aid. There are good reasons on the part of both China and large oil importing nations like Japan to exaggerate the potential of Chinese oil, and it behoves others not to be misled purely out of ignorance.

A final word before we close.

There always is the possibility that Chinese investment in oil in the near future will overwhelmingly emphasize the onshore installations on the Pohai Gulf even though such a decision is not necessarily the best one in the long run. This would increase the importance of coastal defence for the PRC. However, Peking may already have made a commitment to develop its military capability in coastal waters, perhaps for reasons totally unconnected with oil. Given such conditions, however, Peking is unlikely to possess undisputed control over these waters. The nation that can more readily command access to the Pohai Gulf, not to mention the sea lanes between the Malacca Straits and Japan, will also possess a most effective leverage over **both** Japan and China. Will this role be played by the Seventh Fleet in the 1980s? Or will the Soviet Navy be ready for the role?

Notes and References

1. All references to tonnage in this paper refer to metric tons.

2. A very recent comprehensive survey of Chinese mineral resources containing these and other statistics can be found in K. P. Wang, *The People's Republic of China, A New Industrial Power with a Strong Mineral Base,* (Bureau of Mines, US Department of the Interior, 1975).

3. *Jetro China Newsletter* (Tokyo, January 1975).

4. See, for instance, Bobby A. Williams, "The Chinese Petroleum Industry: Growth and Prospects", in *China: A Reassessment of the Economy,* a compendium published by the Joint Economic Committee, 94th U.S. Congress, 1st Session, July 1975.

5. See the discussion by Masahiko Ebashi of the Economic Information Department in the April 1975 issue of the Jetro publication.

6. See *Sankei,* 16 August and 4 November 1974 reports on visits of Japanese importers of Chinese oil.

7. The *Los Angeles Times,* 13 October 1974.

8. *Op. cit.,* p. 24.

9. The conversion ratios used in this paper in arriving at figures in "coal equivalent" per unit of other energy resources are: 1.5 tons of coal equivalent per ton of crude oil, 1.332 tons of coal per one thousand cubic meters of natural gas, and 0.125 tons of coal per one thousand kilowatt hours of hydro-electricity.

10. Estimates of some China watchers in the US. Energy consumption in 1974 is estimated at 380 million tons of coal equivalent by the same analysts.

11. Total energy production in coal equivalent in 1974 has been e timated by US China watchers at 428 million tons. Of this to 98 million tons consisted of crude oil and the rest (330 milli tons) was made up by hydro-electric power, coal, and natu gas. Note that the heat value of crude oil is assumed to be 1 times of that of coal rather than the usual figure of 1.3 on t ground that direct use of oil as fuel rather than in the form refined products makes oil a more effective energy source.

12. The shares in total productivity assumed here are: coal, 67 gas, 9%; hydro-electricity, 1%; as against 23% for oil. Their a sumed annual rates of growth for the early 1970s were: co 5.6%; gas, 8.6%; hydro-power, 14%.

13. Actual crude oil production (not production required) in 19 has been estimated at 98 million tons in coal equivalent or 65 million tons of oil. (See text.) Actual consumption in 1974 h also been estimated at about 60 million tons of crude oil, i.e., million tons in coal equivalent at the ratio of 1.5 tons of coal 1 ton of crude oil, or 78 million tons in coal equivalent at t rate of 1.3 to 1.

14. A much lower figure of 1.1 was used by the author in a cru projection using 1973 as the base year. See Yuan-li Wu, "Chi Energy Resources and Prospects", *Current History* (Phila phia, July/August, 1975).

15. *Op. cit.,* p. 249.

16. *Ibid.*

17. The Chinese reportedly are exploring at several spots of shal water. But larger-scale exploration and drilling in deeper wa will require foreign technological co-operation, if not a foreign capital.

COMMUNIST RIVALRY: *The author, a former member of the Pakistan foreign service, analyzes the impact of Russo-Chinese rivalry in the region, focusing especially on Soviet attempts to "sell" their Asian collective security plan.*

The Sino-Soviet Rift and its Impact on South and South-East Asia

G.W. Choudhury

THE Sino-Soviet rift, which constitutes one of the great schisms of contemporary international relations, is fraught with great strategic and diplomatic implications, and has had a considerable effect on the two Communist giants' perceptions of and role in many parts of the world. It has relevance for a good many Asian countries. It also has great impact on the fragile triangular relationship between Washington, Moscow and Peking. China and Russia in each other's external relations are as important as Germany was in France's foreign policy in the inter-war period (1919-39). The more recent parallels are Israel and the Arab countries in Middle East politics and India and Pakistan in South Asian affairs.

Those who, like the present writer, had the opportunity to read minutes of dialogues between Russian or Chinese leaders and leaders of an Asian country like Pakistan can appreciate the importance and significance of the Sino-Soviet rift on Soviet and Chinese foreign policies. "Maoism" is described as "an enemy of revolutionary forces in the world"(1) by the Russians while the Soviet "revisionism" or "social imperialism" is described by the Chinese as "the greatest menance to world peace and stability"(2). The Sino-Soviet rift has set in motion a train of events affecting virtually all major issues in Asian international relations. China's recent diplomatic initiatives with Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, and the Kremlin leaders' vigorous campaign for an Asian collective security plan are interrelated with the growing Sino-Soviet rivalry. The Sino-Soviet rift is a factor of great significance in the competition for winning the friendship of the so-called "bourgeois regimes" in South and South-east Asia. These regimes were denounced until recently as stooges of "American imperialism"; without abandoning their ultimate goal of peoples' revolutionary success, both China and the Soviet Union are now engaged in shaking hands and welcoming the leaders of the countries whom, until the mid 1960s, they used to describe as "agents" of "US imperialism" in Asia. The Indo-Soviet entente in South Asia, the emerging Moscow — Hanoi relationship in South-east Asia and the informal Sino-Pakistan alliance are some of the products of the great rift.

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SOON after the serious armed border conflicts between the Soviet Union and China on the river Ussuri from 2-15 March 1969, the relations between the two countries seemed to reach towards the edge of a precipice. The Press of both countries began to exchange sharp political comments. Peking's *People's Daily* described "Khrushchev, Kosygin, Brezhnev and Company as 'a heard of swine' and 'new Tsars'", while *Red Star* (Moscow) denounced Mao Tse-tung as "a traitor to the sacred cause of Communism...painted with human blood" and compared him to Hitler(3).

Western sources estimated the number of troops on the Sino-Soviet border at this time at nearly 40 Soviet divisions, many of which had recently been transferred from Eastern Europe, and between 50 and 60 Chinese divisions or about 600,000 men. Of even more concern was the news that the Kremlin leaders were planning a pre-emptive attack on the emerging Chinese nuclear armour near Sinkiang province.

The Pakistan ambassador in Moscow in his

reports in June-July 1969 gave the news that the Kremlin leaders had consulted with their Eastern European allies of the Warsaw Pact about the "contingency plan of destroying China's nuclear capabilities"(4) while Pakistan's diplomatic sources in Peking indicated China's "grave concerns" over such "a pre-emptive attack by the Russians"(5).

The threat of a full-scale Sino-Soviet war subsided in due course but the Cold War between the two Communist giants continued with renewed vigour. The Kremlin leaders' policy of containment of China was evident with the new Soviet diplomatic initiatives such as Podgorny's visit to North Korea and Mongolia and by Kosygin's visit to India, Pakistan and Afghanistan in early 1969. Mr. Kapista, head of the South Asian Division of the Soviet Foreign Office visited Burma, Laos, Cambodia and Japan. The Mongolian Deputy Foreign Minister's visit to Burma, Cambodia, Nepal, India and Afghanistan in April 1969 was also part of the joint Soviet-Mongolian campaign against China. These visits were part of the Kremlin leaders' bid to cultivate friendship with countries on the periphery of China. The *Statesman* (New Delhi), commenting on the new Soviet moves, wrote that the aim of these diplomatic initiatives was to counter Moscow's fears of Chinese designs in the region and secondly to enlarge the number of "friendly" countries (for the Soviet Union) in the area. Similar interpretations were offered by other Indian newspapers such as the *Times of India* which said that these moves were "the outcome of Russian fears of Chinese designs in South and South-east Asia"(6). China was, at that time, in self-imposed diplomatic seclusion as a result of the Cultural Revolution. It was, therefore, difficult to accept the interpretation of the Indian Press about "Russian fears" of "Chinese designs". In fact it was the Chinese who had, at that time, genuine fears of a pre-emptive attack from the Soviet Union and, as Pakistan would subsequently come to know in late 1969, the prime reason for China's favourable response to President Nixon's new gestures towards Peking was its fear of Russian designs. It may be added here that in August 1969 President Nixon asked Pakistan President Yahya Khan to act "as courier" between Washington and Peking in the context of Nixon's new China policy, which presumably took full account of the Chinese fears of Russian designs and the tense Sino-Soviet relations following the serious armed clashes of spring 1969(7).

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THREE months after the Sino-Soviet border conflict on the Ussuri River, the Soviet paper, *Izvestyia,* on 29 May 1969 published an article signed by V.V. Matveyev entitled "A Filled Vacuum" which gave the first, though rather vague, account of the Asian collective security plan. Matveyev's 600-word article referred to the withdrawal of the British from "their present bases in the Persian Gulf Area, the Far East, and the Indian Ocean area by the end o 1971". Matveyev ridiculed the concept of a vacuum "A vacuum is an empty space...the application o this term to our planet is altogether inappropriat today." He also referred to the "machinations of th imperialist, expansionist forces" of Americans, Aus tralians, Japanese as well as Chinese, — "Ma Tse-tung and his associates have definite designs o several countries in the area while supporting th notorious vacuum thesis." Then he asserted tha there would be "no vacuum" to fill. "India, Pakis tan, Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Singapore an other Asian countries are making efforts to consoli date their sovereignty and strengthen their economi autonomy." Matveyev concluded by saying that Asia countries could best resist interferences from foreig Powers by setting up "the foundations of a collectiv security in this region"(8).

Matveyev's article was followed by Leoni Brezhnev's lengthy speech at the international meet ing of the Communist and Workers' Parties meetin in Moscow on 7 June 1969. Brezhnev began with blasting attack on "imperialists" and "Maoism": "W are all unanimous on the point that imperialism as social system has been and remains the principl obstacle in the historically inevitable movement o mankind towards the triumph of freedom, peace and democracy."(9) Then he made an equal blas against "Maoism". Brezhnev claimed that "the so cialist orientation of a number of young States Africa and Asia is an important achievement for th revolutionary forces and a serious defeat for impe rialism", and added: "the imperialist forces ar attemting to weaken the developing countries inte nally, to pit them against one another and to mak their contracts with the socialist world more diff cult."(10)

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IN 1969, a year that witnessed serious fightin on the Sino-Soviet border, the effect of th growing Soviet campaign began to be felt in Asia countries such as Pakistan, which was greatly depen dent upon China for military supplies and othe support. The Soviet Defence Minister, Marsha Andrei A. Grechko, came to Pakistan in Februar 1969 and told Foreign Secretary S.M. Yousuf, "Yo cannot have simultaneous friendship with the Sovie Union and China." Yousuf noted that the Sovie Union had sought friendship with India and Pakis tan, but Grechko ruled the point irrelevant. "Wha is permissible for a super-Power," he said bluntly, " not possible for a country like Pakistan."(11) At May meeting of the Pakistani envoys to neighbou and major nations, Ambassador to Moscow, Salma Ali, said that moves against China were the mai factor of recent Soviet policy in South and South-eas Asia; countries such as Pakistan that sought goo relations with Peking as well as Moscow, warned th Ambassador, would be put to "crude pressures"(12)

The experts on the Soviet Union at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the writer, also expressed concern over growing Soviet pressure "to unite against Mao" (13).

It is interesting that, at roughly the same time that the USSR began a serious effort to curtail Chinese ties with countries of South and South-east Asia, China expressed concern over Pakistan's desperate wooing of the Kremlin and its "being exposed to the Soviet influence"(14). The Chinese leaders' warnings about the Soviet Union were proving accurate as Moscow now began to demand political payment for its arms supplies to Pakistan: it pushed for Pakistani membership in groupings that ostensibly would serve economic and security ends but in reality would be primarily designed to contain China.

The idea of a regional grouping was not new when, in early 1969, Kosygin suggested in Kabul that a co-operative organization be established by Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Iran and the Soviet Union. The Afghan Foreign Minister put forward a similar proposal in 1966, and the United States endorsed the idea for the subcontinent in 1967 when it resumed economic aid to Pakistan and India. Pakistan itself was an exponent of regional co-operation, taking the initiative for collaboration and development with Iran and Turkey. But Kosygin's plan appeared innocuous: it was intended to consolidate the Soviet position and to contain the Chinese in South Asia.

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DURING his second Pakistani visit within thirteen months, in May 1969, Kosygin met at length with Yahya Khan, who had assumed the presidency on 25 March, and urged him to accept the regional grouping proposal. Kosygin shrewdly stressed only the economic aspects. He said that in the past the Pakistan Government, aided by the capitalist countries, had engaged in "vain efforts" to eliminate the nation's widespread poverty — in this context he apparently sought to please Yahya by referring to the failure of Ayub's economic policy. Pakistan welcomed Kosygin's offer of Soviet development aid and trade, but the President was warned by his foreign policy experts, including the writer, to be cautious of involvement in the Soviet Union's more far-reaching economic proposals with political overtones"(15). Kosygin pushed ahead, pressuring Yahya to accept his proposal for a conference of Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and the Soviet Union at the deputy foreign minister level "to discuss the question of transit trade". He added that "Iran and Turkey could also be brought into this arrangement" (the conference of deputy ministers)(16). Yahya, a simple man and a novice in diplomatic dialogues with major Powers, accepted Kosygin's conference proposal in the belief that this acceptance did not represent a commitment to join the proposed grouping; the Soviet Premier got the impression that Pakistan had endorsed his economic proposals.

In the meantime, the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as Pakistani military intelligence, pointed out to Yahya the grave implications of a Soviet-built political grouping on China's South-west flank. Such publications as *Dawn* and the *Pakistan Times* also lambasted the idea of Pakistan's joining the Soviet-sponsored economic community, and Yahya finally realized his mistake.

When the Soviet Ambassador to Pakistan began to remind him of his previous intention to send representatives to the deputy foreign ministers' conference, the President tried to avoid the issue. On 10 July 1969, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, calling the Soviet plan of "little economic advantage", said that Pakistan would not join an "alliance opposed to China". Analyzing Pakistan's rejection of the Kosygin plan, the Indian newspaper *Hindustan Times* on 23 May 1969, mentioned Pakistan's concern that a system of co-operation which included a "giant-like Soviet Union" might work to the disadvantage of the Asian countries. It was, however, the suspicion that Moscow was forming a political league against China that was the main factor in Pakistan's refusal. Kosygin himself had firmly planted this suspicion. "China is not interested in peace in this region", the Premier told Yahya during their talks on the proposed group, "while the Soviet Union wants peace and stability in the region"(17). The Pakistanis found it as hard to agree with this assessment as they did to believe what Kosygin next told Yahya. During their meeting in Peking in autumn 1964, said Kosygin, Mao had told him that "China should be given a free hand in Asian affairs while the Soviet Union should have a free hand in Europe". Kosygin claimed that the Soviet Union could not agree and that this refusal caused "friction between the Soviet Union and China"(18). Kosygin also levelled charges concerning "China's involvement in East Pakistan", and Yahya replied, "There is no such evidence." In fact, Pakistan was more worried about direct Indian and indirect Soviet involvement in East Pakistan.

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NEW Delhi and Kabul received Kosygin's proposals more favourably. This was evident from the joint communiqué issued after Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Afghanistan in June 1969 and from an Indo-Soviet agreement signed in March 1970, under which India agreed to finance a road from Kandahar in Afghanistan (linked by road to the Soviet border) to the Iranian border, there to join an Iranian-built road to the Persian Gulf port of Bandar Abbas. The Soviet Union would thus obtain an outlet, much needed since the closing of the Suez Canal, for its trade to South and South-east Asia — the route would pass through Afghanistan and Iran but bypass Pakistan. In July 1970, the Soviet Union also completed

another sector of highway in Afghanistan, that will ultimately lead from the Soviet Union to modern roads reaching down to Pakistan; the Soviets may hope to use this route in preference to the sea route via Vladivostok, for the delivery of naval stores to their growing Indian Ocean fleet.

One of the ironies of the feud with China is that it led the Soviets to the very "Dullesism" — the propagation of military pacts — that it had damned for more than fifteen years. As pointed out, the Soviet collective security system in Asia was introduced to the world by Brezhnev in his Moscow speech on 7 June 1969. The plan was described as a defensive measure to safeguard the independence of Asian countries against "imperialist aggression and neo-colonialism"(19). That its real aim was to restrict Chinese influence becomes clear from an analysis of Soviet envoys' and leaders' diplomatic dialogues with the Pakistanis, Indians and others. In fact, as the writer told Yahya after carefully reading the minutes of his July 1969 talks with the Soviet Ambassador, the plan called for nothing but "the Russian version of SEATO"(20).

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FOLLOWING a Moscow conference of Soviet envoys, the Ambassador to Pakistan called on Yahya as well as the Pakistan Foreign Secretary to try to sell the Brezhnev scheme. He described the proposed plan in lofty terms, stressing such features as "non-interference in internal affairs of signatory countries" and "economic, cultural and scientific co-operation". The Ambassador pointed out to the Foreign Secretary "the inadequacy of economic collaboration" under SEATO and CENTO in contrast to the more worthwhile collaboration under the Soviet plan(21). But, upon being questioned about security aspects of the plan, the Ambassador had to reveal its main purpose, which had to do, not with economic co-operation, but with China. The specifics of the proposed security agreement also made this plain: for example, the signatories would not enter into any alliance, formal or informal, with a third country that might be hostile to any member countries, nor should they "make any commitment inconsistent with the proposed Asian Security Plan"; in addition, the signatory countries "will consult each other in case of an aggression by a third party"(22). Moreover, if the proposed security plan could be used against a nation that Pakistan considered a friend, it apparently could not be used against Pakistan's true enemy. Yahya wanted to know what help, if any, the Brezhnev Plan would offer "in case of an aggression committed by one member country against another" — such as would be the case in a repetition of the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war. The answer was as evasive as it was rhetorical: "The Asian security plan will put an end to such regional conflicts, which the imperialist countries like the USA and expansionist ones like China encouraged"(23).

Pakistanis were practically unanimous in opposing the Brezhnev plan. The army made it clear to the policymakers that it would not allow them to respond favourably (although they were not inclined to do so anyway), and the Press also scorned the plan. Yahya sent one of the top members of his military junta, Air Marshal Nur Khan, to Peking in July 1969 to give assurance that Pakistan would never be a party to any direct or indirect anti-China move, economic, political, or military. "Pakistan shall not succumb to Soviet pressure", Nur Khan told Premier Chou En-lai during extensive talks on 13-14 July 1969(24).

Reaction to the proposed Asian collective security system was not much more encouraging elsewhere. On a September 1969 Moscow visit to discuss the plan, Indian Foreign Minister Singh first commented rather favourably: "India welcomes the proposal...the essence of the Soviet Plan is the development of co-operation among the Asian countries for the purpose of strengthening peace."(25) But in view of India's traditional opposition to any form of military pact, Singh had to modify his position after he returned to New Delhi. Enthusiasm for the plan in other Asian countries was no greater than that for Dulles's Manila Pact (SEATO) in the mid-1950s.

In South-east Asia, as in many other parts of the Third World, there has been an interrelation between regional and international forces. There is belief in some quarters that South-east Asia would "settle down" and resolve its regional problems if "outside powers" — American, Chinese, Russian and Japanese — would keep their "hands off" the area(26). But the real situation is not that simple. South-east Asian leaders may talk of self-reliance but in practice many of them still feel secured by a doctrine similar to President Ford's "Pacific doctrine" as announced after his most recent visits to Peking, Jakarta and Manila. They are equally anxious to be "non-aligned" in the new "Cold War" between the Soviet Union and China. The main reason for Moscow's failure to get endorsement of its Asian collective security plan by the Asian countries is their hesitancy at becoming involved in the growing Sino-Soviet rift, just as most of the Asian countries were not enthusiastic about the East-West Cold War of the 1950s and 1960s. SEATO has made the voluntary decision of self-liquidation. But the Russian version of SEATO is being actively publicized and campaigned for particularly since the Helsinki summit meeting in August 1975.

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IN SOUTH-EAST Asia, the Soviet Union and China found common cause in supporting the Communist forces in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia but the Sino-Soviet rift remained. The rift was most clearly seen in the case of Cambodia and its exiled

ruler, Prince Sihanouk. China's hold over Sihanouk from the time he was deposed, ruled out the chance of cordial relations between him and the Soviet leaders. The Soviet Union therefore began other ways of advancing its influence in Indo-China at Peking's expense. The Kremlin leaders pinned their main hopes on Hanoi and tried to exploit North Vietnam's suspicion of a Sino-US deal in 1971 when Nixon announced his visit to Peking. As a counter-measure, Chou En-lai invited the North Vietnamese Prime Minister, Pham Van Dong, to Peking before Nixon's visit, presumably to reassure Chinese continued support for Hanoi. After Nixon's visit Chou again met the North Vietnamese leaders to convince them of Peking's "total commitment to aims in Indo-China". According to Prince Sihanouk who also visited Hanoi on 8-9 March 1972, Pham Van Dong later told the Prince that he considered China's relations with President Nixon "to be their own affair".

Hanoi needed both Moscow's and Peking's help while the war was going on. Now, with the Communist victories, Hanoi is an important and independent factor in South-east Asia. In the emerging balance of power now the Indo-China War is over, Hanoi, which has turned out to be a middle-rank military Power in South-east Asia, will complicate the balance further. Even if Moscow and Peking, in their rift with each other, want to improve ties with existing regimes in South-east Asia and also with the United States, Hanoi is likely to send support to insurgent movements in Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and elsewhere. It will be difficult for Moscow and Peking to be totally indifferent while Hanoi plays the role of "national liberator" in these areas.

But thanks to Moscow's and Peking's eagerness to increase power and influence at each other's cost, the existing regimes in South-east Asia have better diplomatic options than if there were "international Communist unity".

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MOSCOW'S "guidelines for Asia" were given expression in a book in which it was stated that each Communist Party in Asia and Africa was free to choose either peaceful or violent methods, provided these were based on Marxism-Leninism and suited national requirements. The book was intended for the inner circle of Soviet specialists in Third World affairs. The Russians seemed to have realized that despite the alleged dangers of collaboration with nationalists and democratic socialists, in most Third World countries a "United Front" with the nationalists and socialists "is the Communists' only hope of seizing power or even of exerting influence"(27).

During the late 1960s the Soviet Union had cultivated relations with South-east Asian governments, establishing diplomatic ties with Malaysia and Singapore, and developing ties with Thailand and the Philippines. Soviet naval activity was also increasing.

Since 1969 the Soviet Union has intermittently canvassed the idea of an Asian collective security system in South-east Asia. Soviet propaganda has continued to harp on the virtues of the plan. The aim of the propaganda was to enlist as many Asian States as possible, including those such as Thailand and Philippines which have Western affiliations. Even Japan is encouraged by *Moscow Radio* "to play an important role in an Asian collective security system". Of course, the Soviet Union as a "State with territory both in Europe and Asia" would be its natural leader. Visits to Moscow in October 1972 by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, and the Shah of Iran gave the Kremlin leaders a new opportunity to air their proposals. Notwithstanding the consistent Soviet propaganda, most Asian governments have shown reluctance to commit themselves to a Soviet-sponsored security plan aimed against China, and Moscow's frequent assertions that its plan "enjoys wide support" are not borne out by evidence(28).

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, seems to oppose plans to "neutralize the region". Malaysia has been trying to formulate some proposal for "a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality" in South-east Asia since 1972. Malaysia was able to obtain some support from its ASEAN partners for the principle of neutralization, qualified by doubts about "the trustworthiness of China" and varying views on the relationship between neutralization and regional co-operation and defence. Tun Razak told a Bangkok Press conference on 15 December 1972 that "we feel it is in China's interest to have a policy of co-existence".

Moscow was critical of any such moves for a "neutral" South-east Asia as it would destroy hopes for its collective security plan; it accused Peking of being unwilling to assist in easing the tense situation in South-east Asia. In the Soviet view "the peace and security" of Asia could best be maintained through the system of collective security. Though Tun Razak reported Chou En-lai's "favourable reactions" to the proposals for a neutral South-east Asia, the *Voice of the Malayan Revolution*, the *Voice of the People of Burma* and the *Voice of the People of Thailand* (pseudo-clandestine radio stations supported by China) attacked them.

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BOTH Moscow and Peking are trying to enlist the support of existing regimes in South-east Asia. Moscow, while campaigning for its collective security plans, is simultaneously trying to cultivate

bilateral relations with governments. Japan has become a focal point in Sino-Soviet rivalry. The recognition in Moscow and Peking that the search for greater influence in Asia must include better relations with Japan was underlined by the prompt arrival of a Chinese Ambassador in Tokyo on 27 March 1973 and the invitation to Mr. Tanaka, the then Prime Minister, to visit Moscow in 1973. While the Soviet Union's aim in wooing Tokyo is largely political, and central to its Asian strategy, there seems little likelihood of any Japanese leadership sacrificing the new formal ties with China to improve relations with the Soviet Union.

For the past few months, the Russians have warned the Japanese against concluding a "friendship treaty" with the Chinese that would incorporate Peking's provision opposing attempts by any country "to establish hegemony in Asia". This was interpreted by the Russians as a rebut to Moscow's efforts to convene an Asian collective security system.

The Soviet Union has been showing signs of anxiety recently over what it views as an "insidious campaign by China to outflank Soviet interest in both Europe and Asia". At a Soviet Military Conference in the last week of May 1975, the Soviet Defence Minister, Andrei A. Grechko, said that Western imperialists were "establishing a united anti-Soviet front with the participation of China" and that "they find understanding on the part of the Peking leadership, which has openly embarked on the path of struggle against the Soviet Union"(29).

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CHINESE denunciation of the Soviet Union has also increased dramatically in recent months (after reaching its most sustained level since the armed clashes on the Sino-Soviet frontier in the winter of 1969). These attacks, which began to mount after the Communist victories in Indo-China, have been aimed at what was described as "Soviet expansion in South-east Asia". Since June-July 1975 the Chinese Press has accused the Soviet Union of trying to "swallow South-east Asia at a gulp"; and it has compared Brezhnev with Hitler, and denounced the Russians for what it said was an attempt "to use aid to take control of the Third World": "the Soviet social imperialists have honey on their lips and murder in their hearts", said *Jen Min Jih Pao,* the official newspaper, in a warning to South-east Asia(30).

China's aim in South-east Asia as in other parts of the "Third World" is to secure for itself a major stake in Asian affairs at the expense of the Soviet Union both as an ideological fountain-head for the world Communist movement and an influence in the developing world. The Soviet Union has been "elevated to the first rank of China's enemies" since 1969 and is still there(31). China is also carefully watching Hanoi's future role in the area. The recen establishment of diplomatic relations with Malaysia the Philippines and most recently with Thailand indicative of China's anxiousness to woo existin regimes. It would be naïve to think that China wi completely stop its support for insurgent movement But for at least the next few years, Peking is likely t give priority to diplomatic relations, as it has foun that its equivocal attitude to Communist insurgen movements in those countries has not helped t speed up the development of its relations with them The Russians seem to have taken advantage of thes countries' suspicions about China's role in Commu nist insurgency.

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IN SOUTH Asia, the great events of 197 culminating in the dismemberment of Pakistan China's informal ally, and the emergence of a ne nation, Bangladesh, gave the Soviet Union and i principal partner in South Asia, India, diplomati gains over both China and the United States(32 The most prominent feature of the "new order" i South Asia is the Indo-Soviet entente which has history of about twenty years behind it. It bega with Indian Prime Minister Nehru's policy during th Korean War and reached its zenith in 1971 when th two countries signed a "treaty of friendship" whic is, in reality, a concealed military pact. It was signe on the eve of the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War Bangladesh(33). The treaty ensured India against th potential threat of Chinese intervention in favour Pakistan. So the Bangladesh crisis provided a goo opportunity for further development of the Indo Soviet entente. Nehru's daughter, the Prime Ministe Mrs. Gandhi, seems to have moved closer than he father to Moscow. The Kremlin leaders interprete the 1971 Indo-Soviet treaty as a first major ste towards their Asian security plan; during his 197 visit to India, Brezhnev used the Indian Parliamen to preach his Asian security plan, — the sam Indian Parliament where Nehru used to talk loftier terms against military pacts like SEATO

The Soviet Union was quick to cash in on i role as a "liberator" of the 75 million people Bangladesh and tried to penetrate into all spheres Bangladesh's life under the garb of an "economi cultural relationship". Moscow also provided the ne country with Mig fighters. The Soviet contribution t the UN relief operations in Bangladesh in 1971-197 was only about US$137 million or 10.7 per cent the total fund, as compared with the US contribu tion of about US$347 million or 27.2 per cent. Y the Soviets gave a lot of publicity to their "concer for the suffering Bengalis.

Moscow's diplomatic objective in Banglades seems to be to include the new State under th Brezhnev umbrella of collective security. At presen Bangladesh is covered indirectly by the Soviet pla

through New Delhi's Treaty of Friendship with Dacca, which is similar to the Indian-Soviet treaty of 1971. The Soviets have also intensified their campaign for the Asian security plan through non-governmental channels. Their claim that this scheme is attracting great interest in Asia is now shored up with references to "speeches at conferences and symposia" and proposals of various parties and organizations(34). These included peace conventions in India and Nepal in 1972 and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) executive committee meeting in Aden in February 1973. A leading role in this campaign is being played by the World Peace Council, whose "conference on Asian Security and Co-operation" in Dacca from 23-26 May 1973 was among the preliminaries to a World Congress of Peace Forces in Moscow in October 1973(35).

The attitude of the Soviet Union toward the "new" Pakistan continues to be unfriendly. When Prime Minister Bhutto visited Moscow in March 1972, he was told bluntly by his hosts: "If history were to repeat itself we would again take the same position (referring to the Soviet role in the dismemberment of Pakistan) because we are convinced that it was correct."(36) This was a clear warning to Pakistan in the context of the turbulence developing in Baluchistan and the North-west Frontier Province of the truncated country. The alleged role of the USSR in the current political unrest in the "Wild West" of Pakistan was dramatized by the seizure of Soviet arms smuggled into the area through the Iraqi embassy in Islamabad. Baghdad Radio's broadcasts for a "greater Baluchistan" and Kabul Radio's propaganda for Paktoonistan are viewed as other portents that Moscow is interested in the further fragmentation of Pakistan. The 1974 *coup* in Afghanistan, which was thought to have had a Soviet blessing, and the new Afghan rulers' threats to revive the old Paktoonistan issue, are regarded by Pakistan as Soviet pressures to browbeat it into the Asian collective security plan. The creation of Soviet client states in "greater Baluchistan" and "Paktoonistan" would fulfil the old Czarist ambition for a "warm-water" port in the South on the Arabian Sea. If this were to happen, Soviet expansionist designs in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf would threaten not only Pakistan but also Iran.

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A RECENT example of the impact of the Sino-Soviet rift is again found in Bangladesh today. After nearly four years of authoritarian and corrupt rule, Mujibur Rahman was removed from power and he and his entire family were killed by some young Bengali army officers on 15 August 1975. Mr. Rahman had made Bangladesh a client state of India; during his four-year rule, Bangladesh followed a single-tracked devotion to India and through India to Moscow. China vetoed Bangladesh's entry into the UN in 1972 not because of any reservation on Bangladesh's genuine right to become a member of the UN (China eventually withdrew its opposition and Bangladesh became a member in 1974), but to penalize Bangladesh for its refusal to respond to Peking's gestures; China wanted to buy Bangladesh's jute and to start trade relations. But Bangladesh could not normalize its relations with China presumably because of pressure from Moscow and New Delhi.

The *coup* on 15 August 1975 was therefore welcomed in Peking and denounced in Moscow and Delhi(37). India tried to regain its hold over Bangladesh by a counter-*coup* on 3 November. The leader of the counter-*coup*, Major General Mushraf, however, could not remain in power for more than three days. Anti-Indian feelings in Bangladesh are wide and deep; a pro-Indian regime could not survive. The next *coup* took place on 7 November, bringing Major-General Zia Rahman back to power(38). Zia is noted for his anti-Soviet and anti-India feelings.

Both Moscow and New Delhi expressed anger and concern over events in Bangladesh. The Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Nikolay Firybin, expressed his country's concern(39). The Soviet news agency *Tass, Radio Peace and Progress* and *Pravda* denounced recent developments. *Radio Peace and Progress* described the recent developments as the work of "certain circles with apparent aid from outside", while *Pravda* warned that "if right-wing and left-wing extremist forces are not given a rebuff this may be gravely detrimental to democratic gains of the Bangladesh people"(40). The *Peking Review*, on the other hand, wrote favourably on the recent developments(41). After the defeat of the Indian-inspired *coup* of 3 November and after the success of the third *coup* of 7 November, the *Peking Review* reported: "The *coup d'etat* smashed,...hundreds of thousands of Dacca residents swarmed into the streets that day to enthusiastically welcome Rahman's 'heroic' return"(42).

Bangladesh, the tinder box of South Asian politics, provides a good illustration of the impact of the Sino-Soviet rift on South and South-east Asia.

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THE REGION: *The author surveys the area in the light of the Communist take-over in Indo-China, and concludes that ethnic-secessionist conflicts have replaced Communism as the major threat to the region. He favours a thorough re-think on approaches to regionalism in South-east Asia.*

South-East Asia Reconsidered

Paul M. Kattenburg

IN THE past decade many dramatic changes have taken place in South-east Asia. Revolutionary, nationalist-Marxist regimes, each cast in its own mould, now control Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Thailand, formerly a bastion of autocracy, is continuing on the path to democratization; the Philippines, previously democratic, is now experimenting with "authoritarian technocracy". Pro-Western, "developmental" style leadership under President Suharto continues in Indonesia following Sukarno's long, stagnant, anti-Western reign. New conflicts involving Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia are developing over Sabah, the Sulu Archipelago and southern Mindanao, while these nations engage in closer association in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Australia has inevitably become part of the region. SEATO, formerly an umbrella for the US military presence, is moribund.

There follow three propositions about South-east Asia, developed as a result of the writer's visit to the region in 1974, which provided him with fresh opportunity to judge the forest (if not each tree) after several years' absence, to compare present to past, and to view the future without excessive preoccupation with transitory concerns. The ensuing essay treats each of these propositions with some overlap, in the hope that a picture will emerge which will help clarify some errors of the past and possibilities for the future. The treatment is impressionistic, intuitive and judgemental; but thanks are due to many South-east Asian, American, Japanese and European sources in the area, all carefully heard and weighted. The writer's propositions are these:

- Ethnic-secessionist conflict has replaced Communism as the most pressing question in East and South-east Asia.
- Repression of civil rights has become widespread in countries which proclaim "development" as their goal; this raises sharp questions of principle and policy.
- South-east Asia as a political region remains essentially incoherent.

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THE post-war history of East and South-east Asia has been replete with the rhetoric of contending ideological poles. Of course, the terms used were loosely if at all defined, and covered a multitude of sins. The "democratic West" was allied in "Free Asia" with personalities like Pibulsonggram and Thanom, Synghman Rhee and Park Chung Hee, Chiang Kai-shek, Diem and Ky and Thieu and the rest. It never really knew, through the bloodshed and travail of the post-war period, whether it was opposing "Communism" or China; North Korea or Korean Communism, or the Soviet Union; North Vietnam or Vietnamese Communism or the Soviet Union and China.

In the undeviating Western policy objective of keeping "the rest" of Asia "free", the dominant perception was of course that China constituted East Asia's heart and bulk and soul. Once "lost" to Communism, China could *ipso facto* export its ideology and its power and the rest of Asia was easily susceptible to both. Confronted by China's "threat", the remainder of the area required the bolstering of alliances, of economic and military assistance, and of an actively interventionist diplomacy not eschewing even active military engagement on the part of the US and of as many other "free world" countries as might be summoned to the cause.

Many factors were inadequately perceived or weighted in this calculus of containment: China's internal weaknesses after Mao's mainland triumph and the consequently defensive requirements of its policy; the latent, long-ignored actual threat to China of the Soviet military presence on its exposed frontiers; the counterweight to China's potential expansionism in southern Asia of a democratic India engaged, at least at times during this long period, in active if not truculent diplomacy to its North and East; the rapidly growing weight of Japan as a counterpoise to China in both North-east and South-east Asia.

But, probably most important, the West failed to grasp the very immensity of this "rest" of Asia which it was protecting from China's presumed threat, — immensity not only in size and space, but in terms of the diversity of cultures and populations living in Asia outside China, or even outside China, India and Japan. How very remote indeed the Asian "Big Three" just named look even today when viewed from the populous Eastern Visayas, from wealthy Sumatra, or from the tri-border region of Indo-China, whose steep mountains and jungle valleys have mocked invaders as ancient as the Mongols, or as recent as the French and the B-52s. And how very distant are the real concerns of real people in Cebu, Penang or Surabaya, from the allegedly all-consuming ideological struggle in the world.

In any event, if the object of Western policy was to keep the rest of Asia "free" of Communism, whether the virus spread from China or elsewhere, it has succeeded to a remarkable extent. It is a sobering fact that Asian Communists, or "the Communists in Asia", do not today (with the dubious exception of Indo-China) hold or control any more population than they held and controlled before the Korean War. The Communist-held zone of control in Asia is still in effect the same as it was 25 years ago: mainland China, North Korea, Indo-China. The last-named was probably consigned to its inevitable fate as early as 1946, when the French began trying to recapture it by force of arms; the ultimate outcome in Vietnam was never really in doubt, that in Laos and Cambodia more and more perceptible as the years went by. The cumulative effect of all the wars fought was, we can now see, merely to delay the formal accession of Communist-dominated movements and regimes which always dominated the real situation on the ground.

Whether or not one attributes Communism's overall failures in "the rest of Asia" to successful Western diplomacy backed over 25 years by successful Western and Asian arms, the fact is inescapable that after these many years of vicissitudes, conflicts and wars involving millions of people, non-Communist Asia looms large (even if less populous than its Communist counterpart) and powerful indeed.

Japan remains democratic and capitalist, bu approaches the future hesitantly. Hong Kong chooses a blatant capitalism and Singapore a buo yant one, despite Lee's socialist veneer. Thailand having pioneered the military-autocratic model in the region, turns to democratic experiments, while the Philippines, having led the way in the latter, is now experimenting with authoritarian technocracy. Ma laysia's problem is no longer essentially Communis but far more ethnic-secessionist in character; Indone sia is now probably further from espousing the Communist model than at any time since it independence.

Moreover, non-Communist Asia is far larger than the countries thus far mentioned. It encom passes a vigorously progressive Australia; New Zea land, which has achieved the near-unique feat o maximum development with minimum industrializa tion; New Caledonia, still colonial to no one' particular concern; sovereign Fiji, Nauru and New Guinea, demonstrating the possible viability of inde pendent mini-states; US-dominated Guam, newes paradise of Japanese tourists; the endless number o small islands of uncertain status in the mid-Pacific not to speak of still "unliberated", still successfu Taiwan. To the North, lies non-Communist Sout Korea checkmating its Communist counterpart.

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ALL this is not to say that the Marxist-Leninist Stalinist or Maoist models of twentieth centu society (or their less significant Korean or Viet namese derivatives) bear no relevance to today's Asia Far from it, especially now that in so many Asia countries the democratic, authoritarian or technocra tic models seem to be in difficulty. However, on proposition that does seem to hold for Communis regimes of distinct hues and variety around the worl is that they tend to persist over long periods of time — a quarter of a century in the Asian Communis zone. By contrast, it is clear that a large part of As has kept its political and economic options open And so the inevitable trend of history predicted b Marxist theoreticians appears by no means inevitable and it has become necessary to shed outworn rhetori and clichés when considering East and South-eas Asia.

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ETHNIC-SECESSIONIST problems in the regio are serious, as can be seen currently in Nort and North-east Thailand, on the Thai-Malay borde and in certain remote parts of Luzon. The Chines in Malaysia, the Moslems in Thailand and th Philippines, and outer-islanders in Indonesia wi continue to challenge, sometimes violently, the do minant ethnic group in the capitals. So, probably will hill tribes in Burma, Thailand, and Vietnam

Communists may continue to exploit these grievances, or even to lead these struggles, as they are doing now for the Chinese in Malaysia, and the Meos in Thailand. But whether or not they do so, it is the assertion of national identity and not that of ideology which is at the heart of each situation.

There are still, as there were at the beginning of the Cold War, many and varied actors in East and South-east Asia; there are still, as there were then, many issues other than and even transcending that of Communism in the area. Today, however, there is no longer any reason for misperception or for casting this vast and immeasurably diverse area into a preconceived, unreal mould.

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IF a very large part of East Asia remains "non-Communist", that by no means indicates that it is "free" in the Western sense of the term. The curtailment of civil rights and the freedom of persons, including the imprisonment of political dissidents and opponents, is now widespread. The sad fact is that throughout non-Communist Asia, non-Communists as well as Communists are being imprisoned, often under deplorable conditions and with no charges at all against them or under only the most transparent accusations of technical violation of statutes, selectively enforced. US policy betrays a frequent preference for "autocratic-technocratic" models of development, somewhat on the former Greek or current Brazilian patterns. "Now that politics have been left behind, the experts can really develop the country" is a statement one hears often from American officials in the area. It subsumes two great and dangerous fallacies: first, that somehow the US is no longer directly concerned with the internal affairs of a country after the installation of an autocracy; second, that a "developmental model" can be consciously chosen by autocratic rulers as the object of rule rather than merely as a pretext to justify the perpetuation of power. Events in both Indonesia and the Philippines have demonstrated, firstly, that internal politics do not cease under the autocratic-technocratic pattern of rule, since opposition develops rapidly and grows almost in proportion to its repression; and secondly, that "development" *per se* is not — it can never be — the object of rulers.

The cases of the Philippines and Indonesia are striking. In the former, democracy was in fact so "healthy" before the proclamation of martial law on 22 September 1972, that many Filipinos and others thought it went beyond reasonable bounds, leading them initially to accept President Marcos' rationales for the measure. Three years later, however, it is harder to justify the continued incarceration, in solitary confinement, of key leaders such as Aquino and of many Catholic priests. Though the latter include some who differ with the regime on the handling of Moslem issues, the ethnic-secessionist conflict raging in Sulu and southern Mindanao is not enough to justify continued martial law. It is difficult to see what could be lost by the restoration of basic rights and freedoms. These at least permitted a healthy, if sometimes excessive, debate on the quality of past regimes. It is certainly arguable that much was lost when elections and untrammelled freedom of expression were suspended.

In Indonesia, where no comparable tradition of pluralist politics and representative government existed, the country will lose in the long run from the imprisonment of many brilliant men and experienced leaders. Although the desire to keep proven Communists under control is understandable, even nine years after the trauma of 1965, to confine all critics, even the most constructive ones, of a very troubled government is playing with fire.

In both these countries, indeed, it is arguable that the regimes are playing the game of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists. If the safety valve of rotating regimes under pluralistic politics and quasi-representative institutions disappears, it is entirely possible that "autocratic-technocratic" regimes are doing for the Communists what the latter were incapable of doing for themselves. What, then of "development"? It is very doubtful whether the short-run gains of "development", if achieved, will be sufficient to compensate for losses of freedom which the US has tended to treat very lightly if not cynically in recent years.

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THERE is still very little inter-communication between the component parts of South-east Asia. What little there is in the way of intra-regional tourism and trade only concerns certain countries of the region. Specifically, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines form the present core of ASEAN. Their mutual conflicts as well as their mutual interests inevitably force them onto some common ground. On the other hand, the Governments of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have not yet been brought into significant relations with their neighbours and look suspiciously upon intra-regional groupings which they regard as being largely motivated by security fears. Nor have the countries of Indo-China begun to proceed with regional constructs of their own. Thailand is perhaps the key factor. Having formerly anchored itself solidly in intra-regional co-operation (SEATO, ASEAN), it is now assuming a sort of pivot role, — its regional foot slipping, while the second foot seeks a place in "the other camp" (Cambodia, North Vietnam, and China beyond).

Mutual suspicions and hostilities pervade the

region. Within the core of ASEAN, contentions regarding Sabah and the Philippine Moslems compound older issues between Singapore and its neighbours, and among the latter. Thailand and Malaysia diverge on issues of insurgency-handling and ethnicity. Black marketeering and the Law of the Sea complicate old territorial and other issues between Thailand, Cambodia and South Vietnam. The Philippines and Indonesia continue to reveal as much animosity and jealousy as fondness for each other. Burma eyes the region suspiciously, though perhaps a shade less so than formerly. The Vietnamese barely tolerate the Khmers who in turn distrust the Vietnamese; the Lao and the Thai can never fully trust each other.

Moreover, fragmentation tendencies are apparent everywhere. Sabah, under Tun Mustapha, is giving at least as much evidence of its independence from Kuala Lumpur as of its loyalty; similarly, the Sulu Archipelago and southern Mindanao are rallying under Nur Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front against Manila. British-protected Brunei seems to have nowhere to turn. If Sabah's interests do not converge with those of any of the large sovereignties that surround it, what then of Sumatra or Celebes or parts thereof? What of the Shan states in Burma and the Moslem provinces of Thailand? What indeed of the enormous areas, peopled by ethnic Meo and Thai, in western North Vietnam, North-east Laos, Thailand, and eastern Burma?

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FURTHERMORE, these countries show hardly any interest in each other. For example, most Filipinos do not regard Cambodia as any less remote than do Americans. Indonesia, despite inchoate pretensions to leadership in the region and worthy participation in the now defunct peace mechanisms in Vietnam and Laos, is far too troubled internally to lose much sleep over Indo-China, though there may be a public front of concern. Even within Indo-China proper, the leading Vietnamese Communists are chiefly absorbed by internal issues and this is similarly true of the Khmers Rouges and the Pathet Lao where their countries are concerned. Only rarely in these three countries are issues regarded holistically.

Profound issues are raised for the future of the region because of the disparities in rates of social change. These disparities leave the Visayas or Batangas nearly unchanged while Manila is ultra-modern; they leave Central Java slumbering while South Sumatra surges forward; Singapore booming and Johore unaffected; Bangkok shimmering and the Thai provinces poor. They accumulate on top of the longstanding differences in psycho-cultural composition of the various regions and countries involved. The latter stem, of course, from association with different metropolises, from varying post-war relationships with the bountiful and generous US from either colonial or (in the case of Thailand) non-colonial backgrounds, from the presence or absence of significant Japanese investment and influence.

Thus we speak continuously of "South-east Asia" as a political region, yet rarely perceive that the Philippines and Thailand are, in their total make-up, at least as different as Britain is from Yugoslavia or Poland. Indonesia and Vietnam differ so profoundly in so many basic respects that probably the only thing they hold in common is the prevalence of wet rice cultivation, — just as Swedes and Bulgarians both grow wheat. And while Cairo is closer to London than Ceram to Hanoi, we do not often group Egypt and the UK in a common political reference frame.

We are led to the conclusion, then, that the regional concept is virtually useless except in a purely geographic sense. As a term connoting a degree of political unity, it has been overemphasized for the sake of conceptualization or easy handling by major Powers external to the area. Nor are there strong reasons to believe that a growing measure of unity will arise spontaneously through regional collaboration in bureaucratic and largely sterile organisms such as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or even ASEAN. Rather, some radical rethinking of the main political and security problems of the region seems in order.

For example, now that the US will have to face up to the possibility of independent mini-states in Micronesia, should Free Association there fail, could thought be given to grouping such states, along with the other independent mini-states of the Pacific Basin, and Guam, Australia, New Zealand, and possibly the Philippines and Japan into a new clearly Western-oriented, Pacific Asia with which the US would have close economic and military ties. (Except for their generic ties to China, Taiwan and Hong Kong too would logically belong to such a grouping, — the very fact that this cannot realistically be considered is a good indication that their eventual reversion to China is inescapable.)

Dismembering "South-east Asia" further, the question should be frankly raised whether its Buddhist and Moslem components will ever find reason and capacity for more than hopefully peaceful co-existence. Inevitably, and for reasons transcending mere geographic propinquity, China is bound in the longer run to exert major influence on its immediate southern neighbours: Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia. Different as these countries are and despite their recently diverging political histories they might, owing largely to the reality of China

find more in common with one another than with the profoundly alien cultures to their South. A China-oriented, Sinitic or Buddhist Asia could thus conceivably emerge next to the Pacific Asia mentioned earlier.

Finally, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia form a natural third grouping in a restructured view of the region. But great caution is in order here. Despite Indonesia's power potential, we must realistically accept that fragmentation, not integration, is at work there. There is little reason to believe that Indonesia, with its enormous geographical spread and immense economic and ethno-cultural disparities, is any less likely to be able to resist dismemberment in the long run than was Pakistan prior to the secession of Bangladesh. This question will have to be carefully scrutinized in the coming years. It could be that Indonesian dismemberment would permit the forming of a viable grouping of states in the southern part of South-east Asia.

It may be comforting to remember that the term "South-east Asia" was the artificial creation of Allied strategists in World War II. The Philippines, Eastern Indonesia, the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand did not belong to it then. The "region" is only 30 years old. It is still barely formed.

SUBVERSION AND INSURGENCY: *The author examines internal security in the countries, which form South-east Asia's peninsular and insular "rim", since the extremist movements there received the morale booster of Communist victories in Indo-China in 1975.*

Communist Patterns along the South-East Asian Rim

Justus M. van der Kroef

AT A TIME when SEATO is to be "phased out", and South-east Asian nations place renewed emphasis in their official security policy pronouncements on self-reliance and on national and regional "resiliency",* the problems of Communist subversion and/or insurgency confronting these nations give no signs of lessening and, indeed, they may in some cases even be becoming more serious. In Thailand, Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj, in recent months, has repeatedly said that Hanoi is assisting the Thai insurgents. Not only the Communist guerrilla activity in Thailand, in which the 35th Pathet Lao/95th North Vietnamese Army Combined Command now appears to play such a significant role, but also the border clashes with Laotian and Cambodian forces seriously impede official Thai desires for improved relations with Thailand's new Communist neighbour regimes in Indo-China(1).

In Malaysia there were already reports in June 1975, stating official fears that the Communist successes in Indo-China had "given new impetus" to Malaysian Communist guerrillas in their efforts to overthrow the Kuala Lumpur Government(2). By early October 1975, the Razak Government was seeking implementation and re-application of sweeping internal security measures, some already in vogue during the "emergency" period of the 1950s, among them the creation of special courts to deal with security cases, new evidentiary procedures for witnesses, and the institution of the so-called **Rukun Tetangga** or household and village surveillance system. These measures, as Premier Tun Abdul Razak explained in his **Hari Raya** (National Day) message on 6 October 1975, were deemed necessary because "while the nation faces economic difficulties, the Communists and anti-national elements have intensified their acts of violence, no longer confining their activities to the jungle, but extending them to large towns, in particular Kuala Lumpur"(3).

At about the same time the Singapore Government arrested six members of what it called a Communist underground organization, the "Mao Tse-tung Thought League", which "comprises a network of underground cells" and which was said to have maintained contact with the "Malayan National Liberation League" (MNLL)(4). The latter has been described by the Singapore Home Affairs Ministry as a "satellite organization" of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM). *Inter alia* it might be noted that, never having recognized the establishment of an independent Singapore Republic, Singapore and Malayan Communists remain committed to the union of West Malaysia and Singapore, and, hence, there is officially no separate and distinct Singapore Communist Party *per se*. It is the CPM and its satellites, like the MNLL, which, therefore, have organizational and policy jurisdiction over the island State. When early in November 1975 the Singapore Government arrested three more individuals for alleged Communist activity, more specifically for attempts to win recruits for the MNLL and for the printing of "Communist pamphlets", it accompanied the arrests with another statement, declaring that it is the intention of the CPM "to stage a resurgence of armed revolution in Singapore", and that through the MNLL an attempt was being made "to provide a steady stream of new recruits for the CPM"(5). Previously, as in June 1974, the Singapore Government had already attributed the discovery of booby traps and other terrorist devices to operations of the MNLL.

Though not confronted with a guerrilla problem on a scale similar to that confronting the Thai

or Malaysian Governments, the Indonesian Government also has called ceaseless attention in the past decade to the continuing problem of Communist subversion and, while in Indonesian West Borneo, along and across the Sarawak frontier, Communist guerrilla operations are at a low level at present, the Indonesian military commander of the region (the Twelfth or so-called Tanjungpura Military District) has warned against complacency in the present condition of "pseudo-stability", as Communist elements are "constantly looking for an opportunity to act"(6). The Suharto Government's concern over its image abroad, particularly in connection with the operations of Indonesian Communist exiles and their supporters, and the utilization by anti-Suharto elements of the issue of those arrested in Indonesia because of alleged involvement in the 30 September 1965 *coup* attempt (officially there are no "political prisoners" in Indonesia), led to a meeting of top Indonesian diplomats, including those of ambassadorial rank, posted to the US, UK, France, Japan, Belgium and Australia in Jakarta in November 1975. At the meeting the chief of staff of Indonesia's "Security and Order Operations Command" (KOPKAMTIB), Admiral Sudomo, explained the tasks of Indonesian envoys today in facing the activities of Indonesian Communists abroad, urging them "to remain vigilant"(7). The KOPKAMTIB Commander of Central Java, Major General Yasir, has warned that in the context of the upcoming 1977 general elections there must be alertness "against the remnants" of the 1965 *coup* plotters and the Communists who must be expected to continue their "psychological war" and foment difficulties(8). These and many similar statements suggest the Jakarta Government's (to some critics) extraordinary and excessive continuing pre-occupation with the threat of Communism. Whether this threat perception is realistic can be argued in many ways. But there seems little doubt that it basically structures all Indonesian policies, the more so since the ascendancy of Communist regimes in Indo-China(9).

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CONSIDERING, then, the varied expressed concerns of South-east Asian States about a persisting confrontation with Communists, what can be said about the latter's own tactics? The diversities of the South-east Asian area, and the paucity as well as self-serving quality (either from Communist, or anti-Communist government sources) of so much of the data make generalizations hazardous. However, focusing primarily on the insular and peninsular rim of South-east Asia (i.e. Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines) perhaps permits an analysis of Communist operations according to the following classification of convenience: (a) infiltration, recruitment, and building of united front organizations, (b) political mobilization and agitation, and (c) open guerrilla insurgency, primarily rural, but also incipiently urban. The last category has been the most extensively analyzed over the years, and a significant literature on it already exists, so that little has to be said about it in this brief sketch. It also need hardly be stressed that these are not mutually exclusive operational categories in any one given South-east Asian country as, historically, combinations of tactics rather than exclusive reliance on any one method have characterized Communist operations.

Compelled today to work in an officially extremely hostile environment of intense surveillance, in which all formal Communist Parties or known associated groups are banned, the publication or dissemination of "Communist" literature is either also proscribed or severely circumscribed, all non-Communist organizational life and public meetings are generally carefully controlled, and with but few secure "base areas" or "liberated zones" (except for in the Philippines, but miniscule in size, in any case) to retreat to, cadres have little room to attempt to win recruits or to construct an organizational network. The impression of the average citizen's life in Singapore made on a visiting Dutch journalist recently applies *mutatis mutandis* to the rest of South-east Asia as well: "Work hard and no nonsense. Remember, you are being watched"(10). Under these conditions deep cover cadres have either had to work with little hope, as yet, of forming an underground organization of any significance, and with the primary aim, at this stage, of sharpening political self-awareness and, eventually, public discontent; or — more dangerous, at the moment — they must infiltrate and seek maximum protective camouflage from an existing, ostensibly non-political club or organization.

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IN THE first tactical rubric belong the OTB concept (**Organisasi Tanpa Bentuk** — "Organization without Form") in Indonesia, and the concept of the Singapore "New Left", as described by Singapore Foreign Minister S. Rajaratnam. In the second tactical category belongs, for example, the pattern of front groups surrounding the two Communist Parties, one pro-Moscow, the other pro-Peking, that developed in the Philippines between 1964 and 1972, and (according to Malaysian authorities) such groups as the Chinese Language Society of the University of Malaya in 1974.

The OTB concept of Indonesian Communists grew out of the disaster that befell the PKI (**Partai Komunis Indonesia**) in the aftermath of the abortive 1965 *coup* attempt. With the PKI legally banned since 1966, and with tens of thousands of the Party's cadres and supporters either killed or imprisoned, some remaining scattered Party activists in the 1966-68 period sought to create new undercover units, called *kompros* ("project committees") to

provide direction. Some *kompros* were charged with winning a following among the rural proletariat in Central and East Java, others with stealing and caching of weapons preparatory to what Party pamphlets called a *perdjuta* (from *perdjuangan tani bersendjata* or "armed peasants struggle"), and still others with sabotage. PKI leaders, among them former Politburo member and party journal editor Oloan Hutapea, appear at this time to have envisaged the formation of an extensive underground "liberation" movement, sometimes called PKI **Malam** ("Night PKI"), using stealth, terror, and intimidation, and operating, among other localities, from the slopes of Mount Lawu, on the border between East and Central Java provinces, Mounts Merapi and Merbabu in Central Java, and Mount Kelud in East Java. The last named mountain is near the town of Blitar, in the southern vicinity of which, in the early months of 1968, Hutapea acted as "President" of a shortlived revolutionary "Indonesian People's Republic". Effective Indonesian military and intelligence action soon made short shrift of the "Republic" as well as the *kompros* and by early March 1969, the remaining PKI underground "bastion" in the Purwodadi area of Central Java had been seized by Government forces(11).

These developments, together with the deepening factional dispute between Maoist and Soviet oriented PKI exiles, and the continuous arrests of suspected supporters of the 1965 *coup* and of the Blitar "Republic", further debilitated the remaining Communist underground. Whatever Party activity could continue in future would of necessity have to be dispersed and under deep cover. The PKI managed to do so. By November 1973, KOPKAMTIB staff chief Sudomo asserted that the PKI was now using what he termed an "ice-berg" approach, in which only a fraction of the membership was "visible". Relying on "organizations without form", the hidden party cadres, according to Sudomo, also attempted to create and make capital out of various social "contradictions". One such "contradiction" involved recent acts of sabotage in Central and East Java sugar factories, where iron objects were thrown into the sugar kilns; another was a fire at Tanjungpriok harbour which caused extensive damage(12). Not only Sudomo, but Indonesian Defence Minister Maraden Panggabean, too, said that the reason why a traffic mishap between an Indonesian cartpuller and the Chinese driver of a car on 5 August 1973 in Bandung, West Java, eventually erupted into extensive anti-Chinese riots, leading to one death, scores of injured, more than two hundred arrests and a billion Rupiah in damage, was because of the activities of a Communist OTB. According to Panggabean, the incident (in which the Indonesian cartpuller after the traffic mishap was beaten up by the Chinese driver) exploded into riots not because of "contradictions" between Indonesians and Chinese in Bandung, but, rather, because a clandestine OTB had been preparing to use just such an opportunity to create unrest(13).

Just, exactly, how the Bandung OTB operated in connection with the 5 August incident neither Sudomo nor Panggabean disclosed, providing ammunition for sceptics of the Government's version of the causes of the riots, particularly so in view of the often volatile character of relations between indigenous and non-indigenous groups in Indonesia. On the other hand, the aggravation of inter-group and inter-racial tensions through rumour, threats, and violence is a well-known weapon in the revolutionary's arsenal, and local Indonesian commanders have repeatedly warned of the tactics of PKI remnants to drive a "contradictive situation" into a "more revolutionary situation"(14). OTB tactics, at least in the view of some Indonesian officials, in effect can interact with and utilize *any* social problem expressive of a defiance of established authority or of accepted social norms. Indonesian Information Minister Mashuri, for example, after referring to the PKI's OTB tactics, described as "sensitive to the nation's security" social problems ranging from the misuse of narcotics and the counterfeiting of money, to juvenile delinquency and smuggling, and one former KOPKAMTIB commander has seen, in the penchant of some Indonesian youths for "hippy" style long hair and shabby dress, a sign of an attitude of indifference and "carelessness" about the future, something which the nation cannot afford in its present policy of maximizing security vigilance and national strength(15).

Whether or not this particular perception is justified, cannot now be established with certainty. But it would seem natural that the scattered, deep cover, cadre operations in the present circumstance of active party suppression and illegality would especially focus on creation and exploitation of any incident that could shake confidence in public authority, polarize political attitudes, as well as provide some funds and followers for the PKI. Instances of sabotage and arson have, accordingly, been attributed to the PKI, as well as robberies for the purpose of purchasing weapons and for the "reactivation of underground Communist organizations"(16).

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SINGAPORE'S "New Left" affords another illustration of a relatively "formless" organization in which Communists mingle with politically aroused non-Communists for the purpose of sharpening "contradictive" situations into more generalized and violent discontent. It has been said of the tactics described in Régis Debray's well known *Revolution in the Revolution?* that they suggest that a regular revolutionary party or organization, including presumably the Communist variety, can emerge out of a

relatively "formless", spontaneous resistance movement, and that to get the latter underway is the really important task for the revolutionary organizer, under certain circumstances, not the creation of the disciplined party and cadre system first. The dynamics of actual confrontation and resistance thus become the "school" of the revolutionary dialectic for the neophyte, rather than the systematic indoctrinating experience in a formal party or satellite organizational context which may not be possible in conditions of extreme suppression and surveillance. In a sense, the utilization of the "New Left" by Communist cadres in circumstances where the Party does not or cannot operate, amounts to the same thing. Student restiveness on the campus of the University of Singapore during 1973-74, fed by other, muted opposition groups and by criticism of the Lee Kuan Yew regime in various international media, suggested to Singapore's Foreign Minister, S. Rajaratnam in an address in November 1974 on political currents in the island State, the existence of an unstructured "'New Left' opposition" to the Government, which Rajaratnam characterized as "groups and people in search of a movement"(17). Common "New Left" tenets, however, included belief in the prevalence of a dictatorial one-party system of government in Singapore, the allegation that Malays were being exploited and suppressed, and that Singapore's economic problems could only be solved through its re-merger with Malaysia. Rajaratnam should have added, perhaps, that these "New Left" tenets, as well as the questions of political prisoners, alleged "supervision" of the Press, and supposed restrictions on opposition politicians and groups, are probably less important than their aversion to a general atmosphere of puritanical paternalism in the public life of Singapore. But the Government has always made it clear that "popularity is its last concern, effectiveness its first"(18).

Rajaratnam's dismissal of the Singapore "New Left" as having been inspired by "Hong Kong coffee shop radicals", and as being an incoherent "rag bag of individuals and groups", captures something of the dilettante, disorganized quality of the university campus activists. Yet it should be noted (as Rajaratnam has not) that it is precisely this relatively "formless" quality which Singapore deep-cover Communists, like their Indonesian counterparts operating in OTB fashion, find useful. Rajaratnam has, however, indicated, and rightly so, the involvement of the Student Christian Movement in Singapore in anti-Government student agitation, and its interaction with "New Left" style leaders, and he has called attention to similar Christian opposition movements, inspired by radical clergy, in the Philippines(19). In Singapore (to a lesser degree), and especially in the Philippines, as indeed throughout the West, "New Left" radicalism and "hippy" style anti-establishment posturing, have influenced younger, socially conscious, student and Christian youth groups. In Singapore, young "New Left" radicals, as in Malaysia and the Philippines, have also made an open effort to identify with some trade union dissidents and, generally, with the plight of workers whose wages have been caught in the inflationary vice. At a time when the "New Left" as a force of change seems to be largely spent in the industrially advanced countries of the West, it is becoming significant in Southeast Asia. The strong predisposition to social activism, the eagerness to find fault with whatever Government is in power, the mercurial temperament of their leaders, and the very vagueness or outright lack of organizational structure or discipline, all have made the "New Left" on Singapore's campuses today — like the frustrated Chinese students of Singapore's Nanyang University in the later 1950s and early 1960s — simultaneously an ideal cover and source of recruitment for CPM and front activists.

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WHEN, unlike Singapore, a more open, if not freewheeling, competitive pattern of party politics exists, as in the Philippines prior to the imposition of martial law in 1972, and to a far lesser degree in Malaysia today, front groups provide distinct advantages for Communist recruitment and mobilization, even if the Party itself is compelled to operate underground. In the Philippines, during the 1960s and in the context of a general dissatisfaction with the inadequacies of parliamentary and partisan democracy as then prevailing in the country, and with the polarizations of wealth, the corruption and repeated failure of efforts at reform (e.g. in land reform), as well as with Philippine dependence on US political, military and economic power, and at a time when formal Communist activity was proscribed, there emerged a plethora of action and reform groups, ranging among many from **Kabataang Makabayan** (National Youth), to the **Malayan Samahang Magsasaka** or "Masaka" (Free Peasants Union). Communists infiltrated from the start; these groups significantly assisted in a radicalization of the public temper, especially among the young and the intelligentsia, and to a lesser degree also among urban trade unions and the tenant farmers of Luzon. Since, at the time, the old Huk guerrilla movement was discredited and in disarray, and since the existing Philippine Communist Party leadership was largely in confinement and wholly ineffectual, the various front groups, usually portraying themselves in Left nationalist or "progressive" hues, provided an appealing environment and source of recruitment to Communist cadres(20).

The front groups retained their specific functional concerns, such as land reform and the betterment of the tenant farmer's life as in the case of "Masaka"; and they were by no means wholly Communist or Communist dominated, — precisely the reason why they were attractive to and afforded

protective camouflage for underground Party cadres. **Kabataang Makabayan** leader José Ma. Sison eventually became the spearhead in 1969 in the creation of a rival, Maoist-oriented, Communist Party, mobilizing both an urban terrorist campaign and a rural guerrilla movement (the New People's Army), while after the martial law declaration of September 1972 the Moscow-oriented Philippine Communist parent body began to speak more approvingly of the Marcos Government measures, and disavowed all attempts to overthrow the Government by force of arms(21). This latter tactic has been in accord with the USSR's generally more sympathetic attitude toward the Marcos Government with which, it is expected, diplomatic relations will be opened in the near future, and also with the attempts of the Soviets and of the Moscow-oriented Philippine Communists to win some sort of legitimization, perhaps not of their Party *per se,* but of a front organization and its programme.

The front-directed radicalization process of the 1960s has thus borne fruit for both wings of Philippine Communism, in that there exists a significant substratum of the politically conscious, articulate, and reform-minded (some even prepared to join the NPA guerrillas), expecially in university circles and among the clergy, for whom Marxist, "Socialist", or even "Communist" are not necessarily epithets of opprobrium, and who, also, with various degrees of intensity, seek or are ready to seek to alter the present political and civil control mechanisms of the Marcos Government. Among the thousands of Filipinos now resident in the US, some of these avowed self-declared exiles and anti-Marcos opponents and resistance organizations make possible a similar protective cover for party cadres, just as front groups in the 1960s provided such cover in the Philippines itself. One may perhaps note, in passing, that because of this radical substratum, the "OTB concept" can also be applied by Communist tacticians to the Philippines today. For with the fronts of the 1960s dissolved, dormant, or closely scrutinized by security services, and as overt Communist organizations continue to be illegal (all this despite the warming diplomatic trend between Manila and the Communist world), utilization of the remaining radical and radicalized temper of reform and of anti-martial law sentiment in the country, as well as among Filipino expatriate critics, can occur effectively through the "organization without form", with the aim (unlike Indonesia) not of overthrowing, but of "liberalizing" the martial law regime.

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A RELATED tactic is met with in Malaysia, where, despite stringent security surveillance measures, various political parties and numerous interest groups remain active. It is the vitality of this organizational life, and, along with it, of a (cautious!) Press and public media world, which again affords an opportunity for protective camouflage to Communist infiltration and recruitment. On 19 December 1974, the Malaysian Government published a "White Paper" entitled "Communist Party of Malaya — Activities Within the University of Malaya Chinese Language Society". Issued after a period of several months of student unrest on the University of Malaya campus, and only fifteen days after police had come to blows with student demonstrators at the National Mosque in Kuala Lumpur, the "White Paper" declared that the Communists in Malaya were operating through language and cultural organizations, ostensibly to further a "healthy growth of literature and culture", but, in reality, to promote subversion and spread unrest. The "White Paper" concentrated on the University of Malaya Chinese Language Society (UMCLS), which, since its establishment in 1962, was said to have become a cover for anti-Government agitation. The UMCLS was declared to have been behind violent student demonstrations in September 1974, over the problem of squatters and illegal land settlers in Tasek Utara, Johore Bahru, and also behind the agitation stemming from the protest demonstration of some 30,000 rubber smallholders and other peasants protesting against inflation and rural poverty in Baling, in Northern Kedah state, on 1 December 1974. The UMCLS was also linked to a visiting artists' group from Hong Kong, the so-called "Hong Kong Silver Star" troupe, which had toured Malaysia in 1971 and from which, according to the "White Paper", the UMCLS took its inspiration to intensify efforts in supposedly promoting Chinese culture but in reality to promote CPM objectives. The "White Paper" also referred to the seizure by Malaysian Police, as announced on 14 December 1974, of a "lorry-load of subversive documents", in a house occupied by eight University of Malaya students who were also UMCLS members. Among the seized documents, according to police, were CPM propaganda materials and "pro-Communist" (not further identified) songbooks, newsletters, gramophone records, and magazines. In a foreword to the Government's "White Paper", Malaysian Home Affairs Minister, Ghazali bin Shafie said that "subversive elements" had seized control of the UMCLS, for the purpose of using the idea of the advancement of Chinese culture in Malaysia as a cover to overthrow the existing order and replace it with one "as espoused by the CPM"(22).

Although the exact nature of the evidence against the UMCLS has not been made public thus far, there is little question that the thrust of the Government's charges is in keeping with past Communist tactics, both in Malaya and Singapore. Alleged protection and promotion of Chinese culture has been a favourite cover of the predominantly Chinese CPM, a tactic playing on Chinese ethnic and cultural pride in a multi-racial society, as well as on anti-Chinese discrimination, on fears of real or

imagined threats to the survival of Chinese in Malaysia, on the narrowing effects of Chinese in-group isolation, and so on.

Despite its present three-way factional split(23), the CPM never strayed, over the years, from at least one general policy position, namely that the Government of Premier Razak (like that of its predecessor) was out to undermine, if not erase, "Chinese culture" in Malaysia. The CPM's chief propaganda medium, the clandestine radio transmitter "Voice of the Malayan Revolution", in a typical broadcast on this theme in July 1974, just before the UMCLS began its overt agitational activities, declared for example that "the Razak clique has been destroying Chinese culture, strangling Chinese middle schools, and wiping out Chinese education"(24). The immediate cause of this broadcast had been the Razak Government's decision, a few weeks before, not to permit a particular Chinese theatrical festival from being held, on grounds of national security. Chinese reaction in Malaysia was bitter, not least because the Government chose not to offer an explanation as to just how the festival's proceedings would threaten public safety. On the other hand, experience shows that the Malaysian Government has good reason to be sensitive to any possibility of a too exuberant or demonstrative (however unintended) manifestation of Chinese life, politics, or culture which may cause hostile reactions among racially conscious Malays (as demonstrated again in the bloody riots in Kuala Lumpur of 13 May 1969). This, precisely, is the Malaysian Government's dilemma, easily exploited by the CPM, whose tactic is effective, although given the vitality of Chinese cultural life and institutions in Malaysia today, there seems little justification for the "Voice of the Malayan Revolution's" charge that the Razak Government had "frantically trampled underfoot the cultural and educational life of Chinese nationals".

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THE UMCLS case points up another Communist or Communist front tactic evident, not just in Malaysia, but also in Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines: that is the attempt to forge a student-worker alliance. This tactic corresponds to a desire, discernible in "New Left" circles, as well as, it is to be emphasized, among non-Marxist students and youths, to make their action programme and demands for reform more relevant to, and capable of mobilizing joint action with the masses, including urban workers, tenant farmers and smallholders. The so-called "Malari" student agitation in Jakarta, in mid-January 1974, sought to address itself to the continuing economic plight of the bulk of Indonesians, and before the imposition of the martial law regime in the Philippines, in 1972, radical nationalist and Communist-infiltrated student and youth groups in Manila had sought an alliance with the trade unions as they staged their waves of anti-Marcos demonstrations.

The tactical significance of students as a distinctive social group, when mobilizing for political and revolutionary action, is explicitly recognized in current Philippine Communist policy. Referring to the Philippine Communists' new "tasks" after the 1972 imposition of martial law, the main organ of the Maoist wing of the Philippine Communist Party said that "the party should vigorously arouse and mobilize the student masses against the US-Marcos dictatorship". Noting that the "democratic cultural revolution" in the Philippines (presumably a reference to the new, more articulate anti-US nationalism of **Kabataang Makabayan** and other youth and intellectual groups of the later sixties) had already "brought out a high degree of militance among them"; Philippine Maoist cadres were now advised to utilize students for "increasingly bigger mass actions", and to establish "various forms of open student organizations and underground co-ordinating committees" to "defy the Fascist ban on basic democratic rights"(25). That this directive has, to a degree, been successful, in that the "New People's Army" (NPA), the guerrilla force of the Philippine Maoists, has indeed found recruits from the student community of Manila and other towns requires no elaboration. And it is, perhaps, more noteworthy that the Moscow-oriented wing of the Philippine Communist Party, which has committeed itself to "open and legal struggle", now also refers in its current programme to the "Left and progressive elements among the youth" as a component of the constellation of groups, ranging from "working class" and peasantry to "progressive elements" among the national bourgeoisie, the Church and even in the armed forces which, the Party programme declares, will share the "political power" in the new Philippine revolution(26). It may be suggested that after Soviet-Filipino diplomatic relations are established in the future, the cultivation of students and youth through cultural and educational exchange programmes, and the activities of "friendship societies", is a likely prospect. The problem which this eventually may pose for all South-east Asian countries restructuring their relations with the USSR is illustrated in the case of Indonesia. After the 1965 *coup* attempt in Indonesia, relations between Jakarta and Moscow became severely strained, and expatriate Indonesian students in various East European countries became a source of difficulty for the new Suharto Government as these students readily lent themselves to anti-Suharto propaganda and to the activities of Indonesian Communist exiles.

In Malaysia, the arrest in September 1974, of two student officials (both Malays and not Chinese, it might be noted) of the University of Malaya Students Union (UMSU), on charges of having interfered with police who were demolishing illegally

built squatters' huts in Johore Bahru, touched off repeated, hour-long, student demonstrations before the Prime Minister's office in Kuala Lumpur. Chinese students, with reportedly CPM elements among them, seized control of the administration building on the University of Malaya campus on 22 September 1974. But within hours, a rival group of Malay students, belonging to the "Malay Language and Islamic Studies Society", retook the building, returning it to the university authorities, and also forcibly turning some UMSU officials out of their offices.

The racial polarization on the University of Malaya campus shown by this incident was robbing student radicals, particularly the UMCLS, of the chance of building a broad-based, effective anti-Government student front. In this respect the university campus was a fruitful microcosm of Malaysian society. But even so, on 3 December 1974, some 2,000 students from the University of Malaya, the National University, and other institutions, demonstrated at the Selangor Club Padang across from the Government offices in Kuala Lumpur, in support of the peasants' and rubber smallholders' "hunger marches" staged on previous days in Northern Kedah state. Attempts to break up this student demonstration led to clashes and to further fighting at the National Mosque where students had retreated. Despite mass arrests of students the campus unrest spread, some University of Malaya students proceeded to demand that the Government should nationalize large foreign-owned companies and plantations in the country, while at the University of Sciences at Penang a student rally called on the Government to provide a basic allowance to each peasant, fisherman and rubber plantation worker affected by the inflation, and to reduce allowances being paid to Members of Parliament. Portraits of Premier Razak and Home Affairs Minister Ghazali were burned in another demonstration at the University of Malaya on 13 December but, although some students continued to boycott classes, the Government refused to be provoked into closing the universities or in reacting forcibly and, by the end of the month, campuses had generally returned to normal(27).

Despite this avowed commitment of student demonstrators to the cause of the Malayan poor, the latter have not responded, and neither then, nor today, is there evidence of the formation of a significant student-peasant alliance that can serve as the basis of a radical force utilizable by CPM tacticians. This is not to say that Communist efforts to build such an alliance will not continue, or that rural poverty, eventually, cannot become an explosive political issue. The plaintive observation in a Kuala Lumpur daily, that the student demonstrators are, in fact, unreasonable because the Government's means to combat the ravages of inflation "are not boundless"(28), suggests that rising popular expectations in Malaysia, with or without the Left's encouragement, may well be beginning to overtax Government resources to the point of chronic future political instability. It is, rather, to suggest that much of the new political consciousness of the Kedah peasant poor, at least for now, appears to be sparked more by religiously purist and social reform-minded Malay Moslem youth groups, like the **Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia** (Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia), and, to a lesser degree, by the small Leftist, radical and inter-racial **Party Ra'ayat** (People's Party)(29). The shadowy, miniscule, underground, Communist front Malayan Peasant Front, though it regularly castigated the Razak Government through the "Voice of the Malayan Revolution" for the "heavy tax burden and unreasonable commodity prices" which, allegedly, have created conditions in which "peasants even have died from starvation", has thus far had little impact(30).

The conclusion seems inescapable. A significant, radical, political mobilization, requiring worker and peasant involvement, must, in Malaysia, first successfully overcome the Malay-Chinese racial antithesis, and its Islam-non-Islam religious correlates. Unquestionably, small numbers of Malay radicals over the years, have identified themselves with the CPM, and now with its two rival factions (the Communist Party of Malaya-Revolutionary Faction and the Communist Party of Malaya-Marxist-Leninist) and their respective "liberation" guerrilla and terrorist forces. Nevertheless, the persistently predominant Chinese character of Malaysian Communism seems, as yet, to be a more influential factor in structuring the dynamics of Communist political mobilization than "proletarization" or class consciousness.

Relatively, then, the racial factor is more important than the religious one, though the latter can have a significant re-enforcing effect, as in Malaysia. Even so, Communist readiness to identify with and exploit Islamic dissent, for example, is as noteworthy as the identification of some (by no means all, or even of a majority) of both Catholic and non-Catholic Christian clergy and youths in the South-east Asian area with "New Left" or with avowedly Communist resistance groups. The oppositional role of the student Christian movement in Singapore has already been noted. As early as January 1974, Philippine Government spokesmen referred to the appearance of "a Maoist oriented Christian Left" in the Philippines, and in December 1974 the Philippine Defence Secretary announced that two Roman Catholic priests had been arrested for "consorting" with Leftist subversives, who, it was subsequently disclosed, appeared to be connected with a front group established by the Maoist wing of the Philippine Communist Party(31). During 1972-73, as part of their OTB tactics, Indonesian Communists, reportedly sought to infiltrate Moslem educa-

tional, welfare, and other interest groups in West Java, a region where, in previous decades, adhesion to Islamic orthodoxy had led to a separatist resistance movement directed against the Indonesian Government. This infiltration attempt appears to have failed. But, both in Malaysia and the Philippines, Communist guerrilla groups have succeeded in occasionally establishing an operational alliance with Moslem dissidents, although some Philippine Moslem leaders dispute this.

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THE causes of the Moslem rebellion in the Southern Philippines are complex. But it is noteworthy that, at a time when the Marcos Government has made headway in coming to a peaceful agreement with major segments of the Moslem resistance movement in the South, the Maoist "New People's Army" (NPA) is stepping up its recruitment and terror campaign in Mindanao, assassinating Philippine officials and security forces and establishing strongholds(32). A radical segment of the secessionist "Moro National Liberation Front", (MNLF), led by former Kabataang Makabayan activist Nur Misuari (described as "Chairman of the Central Committee" of the MNLF), appears to have struck a tactical alliance with some of the Mindanao NPA. In the Thai-Malaysia border zone the co-operation between Thai Communists, secessionist-minded Thai Moslems, three CPM factions and their Moslem Malay guerrilla support units, is confused and unstable. Nonetheless this co-operation is a major component in a pattern of anti-Government resistance that is now entering its third decade and that shows no signs of going away.

In the four South-east Asian "rim" countries here under discussion there are today five *foci* of varying Communist guerrilla activity, although three of these are, at present, on a much smaller scale than a few years ago. NPA operations in Luzon, for example, have lessened with the apparent tactical shift to the Southern Philippine islands, although CPP-ML "field headquarters" reportedly remains North. On the Indonesian side of the ongoing Sarawak frontier insurgency, as far as the Government is concerned, the guerrilla problem has for the moment become primarily a matter of patrolling and ferreting out whatever is left of the logistical support for the one hundred or so remaining ethnic Chinese terrorists (some of Indonesian origin, or trained by the PKI in West Kalimantan in 1963-64) of the "North Kalimantan People's Guerrilla Force" (NKPGF). These terrorists continue to operate across the border in Sarawak, despite more than 500 defections from their ranks during the 1973-74 Government amnesty campaign. Strict surveillance of and effective intelligence among the Chinese of Indonesian West Kalimantan has helped in preventing a guerrilla resurgence on the Indonesian side. Still, this part of Indonesia remains a principal operational theatre of the underground Maoist faction of the PKI, a group committed to development of the "people's armed struggle", against the "Fascist military regime" of Suharto(33). As for the NKPGF, neither it, nor the problem of ethnic Chinese grievances and frustrations in Sarawak on which it feeds, have been destroyed.

But the most persistent and intense of the five *foci* of Communist insurgency remains West Malaysia, not just along the border zone with Thailand, but also in the Malaysian capital and other towns. Since the early weeks of 1974 it has become increasingly evident that the West Malaysian insurgent problem is no longer a matter of periodic guerrilla ambushes of military lorries, clashes with patrols of the security forces, or intimidation and extortion of border villagers. What one now witnesses is a systematic campaign of assassinations of senior police officials, including those engaged in Special Branch anti-subversion work, as well as daring acts of violence in broad daylight (like the blowing up of the National Monument in Kuala Lumpur on 26 August 1975, and a few days later the grenade attack on auxiliary police headquarters in the same city). Within a span of ten days recently (13-23 November 1975), the Chief Police Officer of Perak was shot and killed in the town of Ipoh at mid-day, and a Police Deputy Superintendent was severely wounded when shot in Kuala Lumpur. The train of such assaults, often carried out in the thick of urban traffic, clearly is beginning to exact a psychological toll in eroding public confidence that the terrorism and the insurgency can ever be stopped.

There is what perhaps might be described as a "tipping point" in the psychological environment in which guerrilla terrorism operates, — i.e. the juncture beyond which the mere unchecked persistence of unpunished, or rarely punished, acts of violence against the most prominently visible figures of authority, leads to an accelerating momentum of public distrust of that authority, mingled with fear that nothing can protect one. Such "tipping points" became conspicuous in those rural areas of South Vietnam subjected to chronic Communist depradations. The question must arise, in the face of deepening public concern, whether such a "tipping point" now has been just about reached in Malaysia. Moreover, with the promulgation of new security measures recently, the Malaysian Government has gone about as far toward creating a state of emergency, comparable to that prevailing between 1948-60, without actually formally declaring it and thus jeopardizing its economic development programme and its foreign investors. In no sense, to be sure, is the continuation of the established Malaysian Government in immediate danger at this point. But, if the present pattern of urban terrorism develops further into a more mature pattern of systematic

urban guerrilla warfare (with extensive disruption of public services, kidnappings of revered figures for ransom, systematic arson, provocative terrorist violence designed to elicit Government over-reaction, and so on), then the threat not only to Malaysia but to South-east Asia will become direct and serious.

Finally, there are the effects which the ascendancy of Communist regimes in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia will have on the various guerrilla insurgencies now in progress along the South-east Asian rim. Not only Western observers (cf., again note 2 *supra*) view the Communist victories in Indo-China as having given new impetus to guerrilla activity elsewhere. For example, in September 1975, the Thai Border Patrol Commissioner, General Surapol Chullaksam, noted a direct connection between the Communist successes in Indo-China and the recently stepped up guerrill activity along the Thai-Malaysian border where, h said, insurgents had now been "spurred to prov their mettle"(34). A similar observation has bee made in official Indonesian media, which, as early a April 1975, expressed concern over a possible "chai reaction" in Thailand and Malaysia following th Communist advances in Indo-China. The Indonesia media also noted that the diplomatic ties betwee Peking and Kuala Lumpur concluded in mid-197 had done nothing to modify the attitudes of th insurgents in Malaya(35). Fear that quantities c surplus weapons from the Indo-China theatre of wa will find their way into the hands of insurgen elsewhere in South-east Asia has also been wid spread. One must hope that the South-east Asia nations, now intensifying their efforts to find a new common format of national security, will find th means to meet these dangers.

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COUNTER–INSURGENCY: *The author speculates on the prospects for insurgency in the post-colonial era, and asks whether the present theory and practice of counter-insurgency is appropriate to the needs of today.*

Counter-Insurgency in the Post-Colonial Era

Douglas Hyde

10 NOVEMBER 1975, the day on which, after 500 years of colonial rule in Africa, Portugal pulled out of Angola, marks to all intents and purposes the end of the colonial era. Such colonies as are left tend to be only small islands or bits of desert whose future as independent territories remains in doubt. The ending of colonialism brings also the ending of the anti-colonial guerrilla wars which were such a feature of the quarter century which followed the end of World War II. This is therefore an appropriate moment to ask what is the relevance of that particular type of insurgency and counter-insurgency to the post-colonial age in which we now live.

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WE HAVE inherited from the period of anti-colonial struggle certain ways of conducting counter-insurgency which still tend to be adhered to even though they most often resulted in success for the insurgents. This is despite the fact that today's guerrillas have a fundamentally different basis for their popular appeal. I would suggest that a guerrilla war now is likely to be one which neither side can win, and that each side would be wise to recognize this before becoming inextricably tangled. Counter-insurgency, by aggravating the tensions and problems in which insurrection originates, may well prove counter-productive. Paradoxically, insurgency, by strengthening the very forces of reaction which it aims to destroy and putting back the revolution rather than advancing its cause, is most likely to be counter-productive too. If I am right in this — and I advance the idea tentatively, for consideration — then both sides urgently need to do a good deal of new thinking.

Let us consider first the relevance, or irrelevance, of current orthodox counter-insurgency. Its exponents often tend to be tied to the past. Throughout the colonial period there was sporadic guerrilla activity against the ruling Powers: there were risings against Spain and, later, the US in the Philippines; for Britain there was armed struggle on the North-West Frontier, and the problem of "natives" whose occasional "restlessness" kept forces occupied in India, Africa, and other parts of the world. But these were irritants rather than serious threats to established authority. However, insurgency fought between local nationalists and/or left-wing movements on the one hand and Western governments on the other, did become widespread after World War II. This compelled Western governments to recognize that the colonial era which once looked as though it would last forever was in fact coming to an end.

In South-east Asia there was a rash of insurrections, — in Burma, Indo-China, the Philippines, Malaya and, briefly, Indonesia. Overshadowing them in significance, though not actually providing them with a model at the time, was the long drawn-out struggle for power in China which ended with victory for the Communists. Similar attempts to overthrow colonial administrations by arms, although more often nationalistic rather than ideological in inspiration, occurred in Algeria, Kenya, Cyprus and Aden, among other places.

Considerable military experience emerged from these confrontations, as well as an extensive literature on the subject. Superficially each insurgency was different from the other. However, they had one important thing in common: in practically every case

the scenario was that of a colonial power confronted by a people, or some particular section of a people, determined to end colonial domination and to achieve independence. In some cases this was an end in itself. In others, the guerrilla leadership, if not the body of their supporters, saw independence as a means to an ideological (Communist) end. But in either case it was the bid to end colonial rule which brought the guerrilla cause the largest volume of support. Independence was the spur; it was the guerrillas' strongest selling point.

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THE South Vietnam and US Governments suffered from a disadvantage during the second phase of the Vietnam War: with America's massive involvement, the Communists could still use the popular appeal of nationalism and anti-imperialism which had brought them support in their fight against the French, even though independence had already been achieved. There was, I suggest, a fundamental difference between the guerrilla wars from which those concerned with counter-insurgency have drawn their experience, and upon which they have built their theories, and those which belong to the new post-colonial era which is just beginning. In practically every case the colonial government had a political card up its sleeve which no government today possesses. It was this: at some point independence could be granted or promised; in due course the administration and its security forces could pack up and go, leaving the locals to clean up the mess and get on with the job of government.

Independent governments do not have this all-important card to play. They cannot buy off guerrilla leaders with the promise of independence, nor use it to rob them of their essential support bases. Unlike the colonial governments they cannot pack up and go home, — they are there to stay and, if things go badly, have no means of escape other than to admit defeat and face life in exile. This means that, if the answer to guerrilla war must always be a political one, they have a fundamentally different, and immensely more difficult, job on their hands. They are deprived by history of precisely the ace which gave colonial administrations such success as they had.

In short, the political answer, which all are agreed is ultimately the only answer, was built into the earlier situation, obvious for anyone to see right from the start and available for government to use as required. In some instances it was used right at the beginning, in which case there was no guerrilla war, in others only after many deaths and much destruction. Either way, the outcome was independence no matter whether it was granted willingly or grudgingly. The guerrilla wars of today are not likely to be aiming at independence. Governments must necessarily find other political answers. But these also will have to be related to and determined by the political, social, economic and human factors in which the armed struggle has its origins.

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THE new situation differs from the old in another important respect, which makes the problem still more difficult for any independent, democratically elected government faced with insurgency. A colonial administration operating at the time when colonialism was quite clearly coming to an end, and in a situation where authority was imposed from above, had the advantage that it was not answerable to, still less dependent upon, a local electorate. Its power was rooted in a government situated in some far away Western country and, therefore, in so far as it was answerable to anyone, it was, in the last resort, to the electorate there. When insurrection began, the counter-insurgency machine could immediately be put into operation. This followed a well established pattern which had been learned by the military at staff colleges, whilst members of the foreign service could draw upon the body of experience gained in other colonial territories. Emergency legislation was introduced which equipped the administration with exceptional powers; there was detention without trial; the Press was censored; civil liberties (in so far as they existed) were generally curbed or suspended. Detention camps were constructed and filled with large numbers of people who were picked up in wide-ranging sweeps which brought in supporters, suspects and, almost inevitably, a crop of totally innocent people too.

Police or military, or both, were empowered to impose curfews as and where required; there were food denial programmes and, at some point or another, almost invariably, compulsory resettlement of populations said to be vulnerable to guerrilla pressures, and even the punishment of whole communities whose homes might be systematically destroyed by the security forces. None of these measures was calculated to endear the administration to the local population. It can be argued that they were frequently counter-productive, tending as they did to further alienate local communities and thereby to increase support for the guerrilla cause. In a good many cases the colonial administration was forced to the negotiating table when too many of the population had become alienated for it to be possible to ignore them. The nationalist leaders having gained, or been given, widespread support, independence had necessarily to be granted with as good a grace as possible. Admittedly this is outlining the process very baldly, excluding all political refinements and sophistications, but it can nonetheless be claimed to be broadly true.

But consider the problem of a democratically elected government of a sovereign state which finds itself in a comparable situation. Generally speaking the officers in its security forces will at some point have learned orthodox counter-insurgency in colleges in Western countries. When the armed struggle begins, the politicians declare a state of emergency and look to the military to provide the answers. It is as though a button were pressed and a well-oiled machine goes into motion. Detention camps are opened and quickly filled; curfews are imposed by on-the-spot decisions made by military and police; civil liberties are restricted and the Press censored in accord with "security" requirements as conceived by the military. At some point there will almost certainly be food denial programmes, resettlement of vulnerable or unreliable sections of the population, and punishment of recalcitrant communities. This is how the colonial power would have done it and how it is still done. But all this ignores the fundamental change which has occurred with the ending of colonial rule.

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POLITICAL detainees have families to whom their detention brings distress and, frequently, genuine hardship. People in areas subjected to food denial are made to suffer, — and each one of the adults probably has a vote which the government may need in due course. Food denial, which hurts innocent and guilty alike, is not a vote winner whatever else it may be. Still less is the punishment or resettlement of whole communities. Yet the government's dilemma is that the longer the insurgency continues, the greater will be the drain upon material and manpower resources, which must in turn slow down that very economic development which any population of the Third World insistently demands today.

Aristide Briand said that war is much too serious a business to be left to the soldiers. I would suggest that counter-insurgency is much too serious a business to be left to the security forces. Moreover it is unfair to do so. Insurgency is political in origin. It is first and foremost a problem for the politicians. In practice, when insurgency begins it is usually seen from the start as a job for soldiers. Once it is under way, its direction tends to fall more and more into the hands of the military although they may have no taste for it. The politicians for their part find that whilst their authority is diminished, the number of their political problems is increased as an outcome of the methods used.

As in the colonial period, the political answers are to be found within the existing situation. These may not be as obvious nor as easy as the one clear answer which was available to colonial governments when faced with nationalist armed struggle. But they must be identified nonetheless. And, as in th colonial period, sooner or later both sides wi inevitably meet around the table and concessions wi be made. The question for the politicians to decide once the causes have been identified, is what thos concessions will be, and just when they should b granted, — at once, or many deaths and muc destruction later? When a section of the people fee obliged to resort to arms in order to gain redress fo their grievances there is clearly an ailment withi society, waiting to be dealt with. One does not hav to condone taking to arms to be able to recogniz that when this occurs it may nonetheless highlight problem which does demand urgent attention.

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THIS was very much the approach of th Sarawak State Government when in 1972 switched its main emphasis from military counter insurgency to a political strategy. It aimed a identifying the environmental factors which contri buted to continuing recruitment to the guerrill cause and then proceeded convincingly to demon strate its determination to find answers to th problems thus identified(1). This was, as it were, post-colonial equivalent to the granting of indepen dence in that it set out to provide political answer to what was fundamentally a political, not a milita problem.

The environmental factors were many. Almo every branch of State administration was affected i one way or another since the "environmental factor included education, language, job opportunitie land, the uneven rate of development between on ethnic group and another, and the need for mor ambitious development plans for the State as whole; also, there were the problems of the Chines minority and the need to ensure that, in assistin them, the Government did not seem to be discrim nating against other loyal communities. In practice meant that the Government had to address itse with unprecedented vigour to all the State's mos pressing problems, to explain to the public as neve before what it was doing and to involve all sectors o the population in the effort, whilst at the same tim seeking to weld them together in a new-found sens of nationhood.

Quite obviously such an effort (under the ven able inspiration and direction of the Chief Minister Abdul Rahman Ya'kub) was wholly for the good o Sarawak. Regardless of its effect upon the guerrilla in the jungle, it was bound to benefit the vas majority of people who longed only for peace an the chance to get on with the job of raising thei own, and their people's standard of life.

The political strategy succeeded to a spectacu lar degree. Far sooner than any of those responsibl

ould have dared hope, the insurgents requested alks aimed at an honourable settlement which would nd the process of killing and being killed (which ad by then come to be seen by the guerrillas as uite pointless), and which would bring peace to the tate and so open the way to more rapid develop- nent. Practically every guerrilla of any military onsequence or ideological standing came out of the ungle. The remnant left inside had little option but o choose banditry or ultimate extinction. It was ignificant that those who went to meet the guerrilla eaders for the talks in the jungle were led by the hief Minister and were exclusively civilians. The olice were present, the Army were not. And at eace celebrations and rallies held a few months ater all over the country, after the guerrilla leaders ad brought their followers out and had ceremonial- y destroyed their arms, it was again the politicians nd other civilians who were in the forefront. The ilitary, adopting a low profile, were hardly in vidence at all. It was in a very real sense a political ccasion. The experiment had been a political one nd it had worked.

The military had been involved in conventional ounter-insurgency, which meant in combat in vary- ng degrees of intensity, for more than 10 years. iven their background, training and equipment, ey had done all that was demanded of them. But eirs had, as is usual in such insurgency situations, een a thankless task. To be obliged to conduct a rm of counter-insurgency appropriate to an entirely ifferent period and situation, whilst somehow ontriving not to let military operations conflict with e political requirements of a democratically elected overnment was, in retrospect, not only thankless but irtually impossible.

This serves to emphasize the dilemma which ust face any government and any Army in an surgency situation today. For example, the same ould be said of Northern Ireland. The military have o love for a task which they instinctively feel is not roperly theirs, whilst the Government ruefully has o bear the odium and the political consequences of e Army's activities. Almost everything the Army oes in such circumstances is by its very nature olitically counter-productive. This is no fault of the rmy. The fault lies in using a blunt instrument, rged for quite other purposes, in a situation calling r something very different. This is as true of the ack streets of Belfast as of the jungle villages of arawak.

The Sarawak experience highlights another, as et unresolved problem. Short of a government omposed exclusively of pacifists (which the State overnment and the Malaysian Federal Government ertainly are not) no government feels it can afford to e the authority and standing of its armed forces in ny way diminished. Still less does it want to see the Army demoralized or disaffected. Any switch to a political strategy must therefore be undertaken with due regard for the Army's feelings, and every effort made to involve it as deeply as possible in the positive implementation of the Government's socio-economic programme.

The Malaysian Government has on its hands a relatively small but worrying and growing problem of insurgency in West Malaysia. This was inherited from the colonial period, though it may take on new forms and a different significance today. I am in no position to say whether a switch to a predominantly political strategy would succeed in West Malaysia since my involvement was much greater in Sarawak in recent years than it was there. But the mere fact that insurgency has once more become a problem of some significance, just as in the Philippines years after the almost total defeat of the Huks, would suggest to my mind that the same environmental factors are operative today and that it is the political-cum-socio-economic answer which has to be found.

No Army would choose as its role the crushing of rebellion by its own people, nor would any democratic government choose to have to use the Army for such a task. Even viewed in the most pragmatic way the Army is a somewhat blunt and heavy instrument for the maintenance or restoration of law and order, which is a job more appropriate to the police. It is conceivable that the logic of events will lead governments to think less of automatically seeking military answers to political problems and to turn first and most naturally to a more positive approach.

If, however, governments are now faced with the need for new thinking on the question of what is the best way to deal with insurgency it may be of some comfort to them to know that their problems are certainly no greater than are those of today's guerrilla fighters. If governments have problems, revolutionaries certainly have theirs.

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WITH independence struggles virtually at an end, the majority of guerrilla forces are now most likely to be, first and foremost, ideologically motivated. This in practice means, in the majority of cases, Marxist in one form or another and to a greater or lesser extent. For a century, from 1848 to 1948, Marxists believed they knew just how the armed conquest of power should be conducted, when it should occur, where it should take place, who should lead it and who should fight it. This is no longer the case. 1848 was "the year of revolutions", when revolutions occurred in some 20 countries right across Europe. It was also the year in which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published the *Communist*

Manifesto. Both had written before on military subjects and both were active revolutionaries. When they wrote their manifesto they took it for granted that the Communist revolution would follow the pattern of those revolutions they had known: there would be a short, sharp struggle for power, which would occur in the cities, since it was there that power resided; it would be led by Communists, and the vanguard fighters would be the industrial proletariat who, in the stirring words of the manifesto, "have nothing to lose but their chains and a world to win".

No such revolution, other than the insurrection which brought into existence the short-lived Paris Commune of 1871, occurred until 1905. Then, during the Russo-Japanese war, workers, soldiers and peasants engaged in a rising which, although it was not led by the Bolsheviks, became the dress rehearsal for the 1917 October Revolution. This followed the classic Marxist-Leninist pattern. There was a short, sharp struggle for power in the cities, it was led by Communists, and the proletariat (assisted by peasant and soldier allies) did the fighting.

Marx and, later, Lenin had argued that the collapse of capitalism would be the prelude to the revolution and that this was most likely to be precipitated by war or profound economic crisis. In such circumstances it was the job of revolutionaries to seize the moment of opportunity when the revolutionary situation arose. And Lenin was able to define just what would be a revolutionary situation: then, and only then, should Communists take to the gun and make the revolution.

In the case of Russia, it worked. Understandably, therefore, the Moscow-dominated Communist International ("Comintern"), brought into existence by the Russians, took it for granted that this was how Communist revolutions would always be made. This was spelt out in detail in *The Programme of the Communist International* which every good Communist studied and absorbed throughout the 1930s. War had provided the Bolsheviks with their opportunity in 1917. It was not surprising that the Communists expected World War II to bring other Communist regimes into existence. Their hopes were pinned even more firmly to this, since the profound economic crisis which preceded the war had failed to bring a single Communist government to power. In practice, with the possible exception of Yugoslavia and Albania, those Communist regimes which did in fact emerge as part of the aftermath of the war owed their origins to the Soviet Red Army rather than to revolution. What one can say is that, with the sole exception of Cuba, every Communist government in the world today came into existence either as a result of a world war or as part of the aftermath of war. War has served the cause of Communism well.

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HOWEVER, in this nuclear age Russia has fel obliged to work for peaceful co-existence an for détente as a means of avoiding a Third Worl War, since this might well destroy not only capitali ism but Communism too. This being so, th Communists are denied the very circumstances b which they achieved success in the past. An capitalist crisis, which failed to deliver the goods las time, does not, contrary to what they once believed automatically bring with it the collapse of capitalism and the hoped-for revolutionary situation. In othe words, the moment of opportunity tends tantalizingl to disappear over the horizon.

As the writings of Chairman Mao becam known, following the Chinese Communist victory, i seemed that a new model for the achievement o power by armed struggle had been provided, parti cularly for countries of the Third World. Th Chinese Communists, as good Marxists, had, in thei Party's earliest years, placed their hopes upon th urban proletariat and so had tried to seize power i the cities. It was not from choice that they wer made to reverse the whole Marxist strategy and t place their hopes, not on a short, sharp struggle fo power in the cities but on protracted guerrill warfare in the rural areas. Mao Tse-tung's doctrin of surrounding the cities from the countryside wa forced upon the Party by grim necessity.

Communist revolutionaries tend to universaliz their own particular experiences. The Russians di it, and so in turn did the Chinese. "What we ha done, you can do", Chairman Mao told the delega tions which flocked to Peking from all over Asia Africa and Latin America. "We were once backward, semi-feudal, semi-colonial country, jus like you." And many a delegation went hom believing that they should study the military an political writings of Mao Tse-tung and then take t the jungle and do what the Chinese had done. I some cases they couldn't even wait to read the majo works but were content to take with them the "little little red book" (which confines itself to Chairma Mao's thoughts on guerrilla warfare and is of a siz to fit into one's battledress pocket) to refer to a required.

In practice, Mao's road proved not to be simple, certain way to victory, still less a short one The Chinese could argue that almost every countr of the Third World had suitable terrain for guerrill warfare but those who listened to them soon foun that they lacked the vast spaces of China and, ever more important, the Chinese had had the advantag that theirs was already a nation in the throes o revolutionary change when the Communists took u the struggle. There have been many who have die in Asian jungles and elsewhere because they hav had too simplistic an approach to Mao Tse-tung' theories of guerrilla warfare and discovered too lat

hat what was right for China was not necessarily ight for them.

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THERE was yet another problem. When the Chinese Communists took to guerrilla warfare hey did not do so with the expectation that the ght would continue for 20 years or more. In etrospect, after the victory had been won, those 20 ears of costly bloodshed were, no doubt, thought to e well worthwhile. But those who attempted to ollow the Chinese way either started the struggle ith the expectation of many years of guerrilla arfare or else they quickly discovered that the ruggle would be a long one. Once the attempt at a uick victory had failed, the Communist Party of Malaya's leaders have over and over again had to ress that their followers must be prepared for a long and arduous struggle", or a "protracted" uerrilla war. Thailand's Communist leaders have arned that the road to socialism is going to be a long and winding one". All this tends to be iscouraging talk for eager young revolutionaries.

By definition, one might almost say, a revolutionary is a man in a hurry, too impatient to take he slow democratic, peaceful way. You do not ecome a revolutionary in order to take a long and inding road; revolution is an attempt to cut corners nd take the short way. To be told the opposite can e very disillusioning. This tends to reduce greatly the ppeal of guerrilla warfare. It cannot be expected to voke the same spontaneous, emotional mass response hich comes when the bid for power is made in me great capital city. Many Asian youngsters have arned the hard way that being a Maoist guerrilla the jungle lacks both the glamour of a Robin ood and the heady excitement of being an urban evolutionary fired with the expectation of an early ctory.

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CASTRO'S successful struggle in Cuba proved, therefore, all the more attractive. For here was n example of power being seized by guerrilla action sting less than two years. The Cubans had not had wait for the elusive Leninist "revolutionary tuation" to arise, they created it themselves by their wn armed struggle, eroding the economy and earing down the Government; the main struggle as not in the cities but in the mountains, and the hole enterprise was started by just a handful of etermined men who put their trust in themselves ather than in the masses. Here, indeed, was "instant evolution" in a Third World country, — a stirring essage for any impatient revolutionary.

It was not surprising that Marxists of various ues throughout Latin America were soon attempting to do what China had done. They had Che Guevara, who was not only the theorist of the Cuban revolution but its most dashing and appealing practitioner too, to tell them as Mao before had done that "what we have done, you can do".

"We ought not", Che Guevara said, "to wait for all the revolutionary conditions to become ripe; the centre of the uprising can create such conditions." And, again: "Given suitable operating terrain, land hunger, enemy injustices, etc., a hard core of thirty to fifty men is, in my opinion, enough to initiate armed revolutions in any Latin American country."

The Latin American countries, once the colonies of Spain and Portugal, fought for, and gained, their political independence a century and a half ago, but the Latin American Left would argue, as did Castro in Cuba, that that independence was unreal, that their countries were neo-colonies of the United States and that an authentic independence had still to be fought for and won.

In the years immediately following the Cuban victory there was guerrilla action in Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Panama. Inspired by Castro and Guevara, students and other young revolutionaries would take to the hills, establish a small "focus" and hope that before long the various foci would, like so many oil spots, join to become a revolutionary army. Whilst still calling themselves Marxists (although frequently disapproved of by the orthodox Communist Parties) they moved very far away from any known Marxist theory of revolution, thus foreshadowing the confusion which now exists amongst Marxists the world over.

Good Marxists hold that the support of the masses is essential since it is they who must make the revolution. Che Guevara, on the contrary, said that this was the age of the "heroic guerrilla", so putting the decisive emphasis upon the individual rather than upon the masses. Lenin had said that you must wait for (and, of course, help to create) the revolutionary situation and that until this arose you should never "play with revolution". In other words, you do not take to the gun at other times, unless in the most exceptional circumstances when revolutionaries are under armed attack. Most of the Latin American Left came to accept, from Guevara, that guerrilla warfare itself creates the revolutionary situation; you do not have to wait for it and if guns are available you use them.

Marx and Lenin placed the main emphasis upon the industrial proletariat, the "vanguard of the revolution". The overwhelming majority of Latin American revolutionaries tended to be young intellectuals or people drawn from the professional classes

with maybe a few land-hungry or disaffected peasants playing a very subordinate role. At one point some leaders of orthodox Communist parties were heretical enough to suggest that "youth" constituted, to all intents and purposes, a revolutionary class in itself. They were guilty of momentarily adapting their theory to the hard reality that, whilst they could attract young students to the armed struggle, the proletariat seemed far less anxious to join in. It was not long before they stepped back into line, but the more extreme left-wing groups were less bothered about such questions of orthodoxy and, to all intents and purposes, despite any lip-service they might pay to the vanguard role of the workers, relied far more heavily upon students and middle-class elements.

One feature of the Cuban revolution which caught the imagination of Latin American imitators was "the technique of the dramatic gesture". In Cuba, this was relatively humane. A racing driver or, maybe, a famous footballer would be seized within full view of a crowd of spectators and taken off to the hills, — a form of armed propaganda which was guaranteed to catch the headlines of the world's Press. This technique undeniably served Castro's cause very well. Those kidnapped were returned in good shape, and were able to tell Pressmen that they had been well treated, and that Castro's guerrillas, far from being savages or barbarians, were kindly and cultivated people.

Transplanted into countries where the struggle was more difficult, the technique of the dramatic gesture tended to take on a more ugly character. In Venezuela, for example, the guerrillas promised to kill a policeman a day for nine days in succession, and did so with all Venezuela keeping the score. Kidnappings ended in murder.

As time went on the kidnapped victims began to include US military advisers, foreign diplomats and others. The hijacking of aircraft had all the necessary drama and became, as it continues to be, a marked feature of revolutionary action: Che's "heroic guerrilla", by a natural process, developed into the individual terrorist even though acts of individual terrorism had traditionally been denounced by Marxists from Karl Marx on. The dividing line between anarchism and Marxism, once very clearly defined, closed visibly.

Che Guevara had written: "We must carry the war as far as the enemy carries it: to his home, to his centres of entertainment, in a total war. It is necessary to prevent him from having a moment of peace, a quiet moment outside his barracks or even inside; we must attack him wherever he may be, make him feel like a cornered beast wherever he may move. Then his morale will begin to fall. He will become still more savage, but we shall see the signs of decadence begin to appear."

Soon the Brazilian, Carlos Marighela (a to Communist Party leader who broke with the Part because it was not moving fast enough) was writin in his *Mini-Manual of Guerrilla Warfare* that it wa necessary to create a situation where "the govern ment has no alternative except to intensify repres sion. The police networks, house searches, arrests c innocent people and of suspects, closing of streets make life in the city unbearable. The militar dictatorship embarks on massive political persecution Political assassinations and police terror becom routine...The people refuse to collaborate with th authorities, and the general sentiment is that th government is unjust, incapable of solving problem and resorts purely and simply to the physica liquidation of its opponents."

In other words, the aim is to force th government into policies which add to the hardship of the working people whilst also provoking it int repressive action, so compelling the "capitalist beast to bare its claws. What Marighela is advocating is peculiarly ruthless form of armed propaganda. It ha by now become routine practice for many groups c the extreme Left, of which the Tupamaros c Uruguay and the Montoneros of Argentina ar obvious current examples.

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BUT this sort of new Marxist-cum-terrori approach is no longer confined to Lati America. It has become part of the thought an practice of, among others, Black September, th Japanese Red Army and the German Baader-Mei hof group. Maoists and some of the more extrem Trotskyist groups in Europe and elsewhere, usin Marighela's tactic, regularly set out to provoke polic into reacting with brutality before the televisio cameras of the world, as a means of discrediting th capitalist enemy. But orthodox Communists see th sort of provocation as counter-productive. Mar would hold that it was the provocations of th ultra-Left which, more than anything, invited th fatal backlash from Chile's middle class which final brought down the Allende regime. They woul claim, too, that it was extremist provocation whic repeatedly imperilled the revolution in Portuga

Once upon a time the organizational bounda ries between left-wing groups and parties were clear defined, as were the differences in their thinking an policies too. This is no longer the case. Tactics use by one may be quickly "borrowed" by others wh feel obliged to keep up the pace in militancy. Th can have its effect upon the Communist Parties fro which many of the smaller, more extreme groups an breakaways. Either for opportunistic reasons or fo fear of being left behind, they indulge in metho which are against Marxist-Leninist teachings. Assa sination and other forms of terrorism which wer

once denounced are resorted to increasingly in non-revolutionary situations.

It would not have been unreasonable to think that after Castro's victory in Cuba, "dominoes" would proceed to fall all over Latin America; certainly the local revolutionaries supposed that this would be so and some governments feared that this might be the case as well. There was armed struggle in various countries but in all cases it failed. The reason for this most certainly did not lie in the social conditions or in the political situation. These were manifestly conducive to revolution in some cases. Nor does the answer lie with some new and peculiarly successful approach to counter-insurgency by the security forces, for there is little evidence of this. The divisions within the revolutionary movement, and the lack of a clear sense of direction, did far more to bring about its failure than did anything done by the security forces. Just when aims, methods and ideological beliefs alike needed to be most clear-cut, and when unity was all-important, the movement was more confused and divided than ever before. What was true of Latin America then is becoming increasingly true elsewhere today.

Not only is the once monolithic Communist movement deeply fragmented internationally, so is the movement within almost every country of the world. Innumerable Marxist and ultra-Marxist "sects" compete, and from time to time actually fight each other. Maoist and Trotskyist parties split and split again with each new splinter group necessarily having to be more militant in order to justify its existence.

The Communist cause is obviously ill served by the splits which have occurred within the Communist Party of Malaya, and by the fact that, whilst the traditional Communist Party of the Philippines gives qualified support to the Marcos regime, the Maoist New People's Army fights with guns against that same regime, — and sometimes against the Communists too. Of India's three rival Communist parties, one supports Mrs. Gandhi while the other two oppose her. One denounces terrorism, another used as its principle weapon. There was a time when Communists everywhere saw India as a land of particular promise; today that must appear to many of them as little more than a sick dream.

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WHERE once revolutionaries believed that they knew just when, how and by whom the revolution could be made, today they have no clear answers to any of these qustions. Must one wait for the revolutionary situation to arise or should one take to the gun immediately? Should the revolution be led by workers, intellectuals, peasants, students? Should it be fought in the countryside or in the towns? Is terrorism in non-revolutionary situations permissible? Or is its use a dangerous distraction from the real struggle and from the revolutionary role of the masses? Revolutionaries are indeed in trouble when they no longer know how to make the revolution!

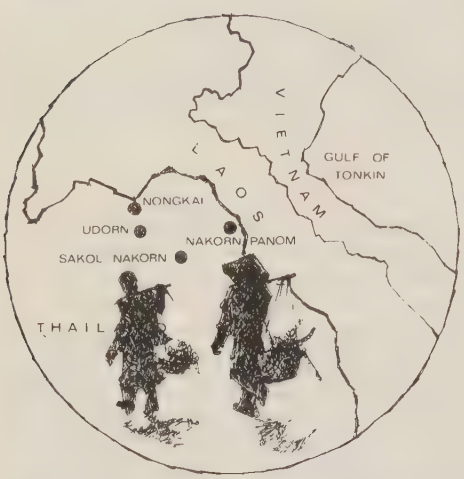
The fact is that the Marxist revolution is in disarray. The movement has lost its certainties and it has lost its way. It bears little resemblance to the highly disciplined, well organized, ideologically united and deeply indoctrinated international revolutionary army which the old Communist International prided itself on being. Local revolutionary movements and terrorist organizations, exploiting the special problems of minority groups, or exceptional situations, may still engage in struggles aimed at the seizure of power, and it would be a very unwise man who suggested that none of these could ever again succeed. But it is not unreasonable to suggest that protracted armed rebellion against an established independent government stands relatively little chance of success today.

It is more likely that, if governments do not find positive, political answers when guerrilla war begins, but continue to rely first and foremost upon conventional, military counter-insurgency, the armed struggle, once begun, may drag on over the years to the detriment of all concerned but with success for neither side. The revolutionaries will wound without being able to kill. The nation's desperately needed resources in men and materials will be diverted into purely destructive channels, thus holding back development. The effect will be to aggravate existing social and political problems. Guerrilla wars are likely to be wars which no one wins and in which everyone is the loser. Unless, that is, all concerned recognize that new situations call for new approaches. The ending of the wars in Indo-China, and the ending of the long colonial era, surely constitute such a new situation.

Notes and References

1. See "Sarawak: An Insurgency in Retreat", by Douglas Hyde, [*Spectrum*, Volume 2, No. 4, July 1974].

MINORITY GROUPS: *The author examines the role played by the Vietnamese community in Thailand's north-eastern provinces, in affecting the state of relations between Thailand and its traditional rival in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, Vietnam.*



The Vietnamese in Thailand: their Continuing Role in Thai-Vietnamese Relations

Peter A. Poole

SEVEN months after the fall of Phnom Penh and Saigon, it appeared that the normalization of relations between countries on the South-east Asian mainland — and between these States and outside Powers — was proceeding rapidly. True, the *rapprochement* between Thailand and the new Government in Cambodia was the only new link formed in this period between countries in the region. But this was a most dramatic step. Many writers on the region had predicted a common hostility toward Vietnam would unite the Thais and Khmers eventually; but few foresaw in May that relations between the two neighbours would be restored as soon as November, or that Ieng Sary (the Khmer Rouge leader who supposedly leaned toward Hanoi) would be flown to Bangkok in a Chinese plane for the negotiations.

Ieng Sary and his colleagues were met and feted in Bangkok by the PRC Chargé d'Affaires to Thailand, who had newly arrived from Peking. The *rapprochement* also coincided with the takeover in Laos by the Vietnamese-supported Pathet Lao and the resumption of bitterly anti-Thai broadcasts by Radio Hanoi. Who could doubt that Peking viewed the Thai-Khmer *rapprochement* as limiting the influence of Hanoi and Moscow in South-east Asia?

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THE term "normalization", as I have used it thus far, suggests that an almost inevitable, preordained process is at work: remove the historical anomaly of US involvement on the mainland, and everyone will simply revert to form. Khmers are born to resist Vietnamese; Thais and Vietnamese are destined to vie for influence in Laos and Cambodia; and China must invariably see its interest in backing weaker neighbours against stronger ones. I think there may be a modicum of truth in these broad clichés. But I doubt that they tell us much about how the process of interstate relations works, either in general or in specific instances.

Some years ago, I began to develop the thesis that relations between neighbouring States are often influenced by the presence of some of country A's people in country B. This is probably particularly true when the minority occupies a fairly visible position in the host country because of its size, concentration, economic or political role, failure to assimilate to the local culture, or some combination of such reasons. Moreover, the characteristics attributed to the minority do not have to be objectively proven — they have only to be alleged and believed by somebody — for the minority to become a factor in interstate relations.

For example, it would obviously affect relations if a minority were believed, in the host country, to be controlled or influenced by the Government of their country of origin. And the latter Government is sure to respond if it seems that the host Government mistreats the minority. A Foreign Office with very limited resources to back its policy may find that manipulating a minority group is one of the easiest ways to influence its neighbour. The temptation seems to be greatest when the adjoining countries have little to lose in the way of commercial, cultural or other ties.

This situation is, of course, common when one or both of the adjoining countries was long ruled by a colonial Power. But the interplay of minority

politics and foreign policy is by no means limited to the recently emancipated countries of Asia and Africa. It is a nearly universal feature of political behaviour. On the positive side, the presence of a minority can help to reinforce other factors that make for stable and harmonious relations between neighbours. Some minorities are perceived as playing an essentially useful role in the host country, and some minorities serve as hostages for the moderate behaviour of neighbouring States.

All of these circumstances seem to apply to a large number of countries. I have done some research in the past on the historic and recent role of Vietnamese minorities in Thailand and Cambodia in interstate relations(1). The present paper is a postscript to that earlier research. My purpose is to update the story of how minority politics and foreign policy interact in this region. This requires a brief summary of earlier observations.

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IN THE case of Cambodia, the Lon Nol Government initially sought to rally Khmer public support by denouncing the large Vietnamese minority in Cambodia as a "fifth column" working for the Viet Cong. Vietnamese Communist and ARVN forces responded to this provocation, which was one of the major blunders that led to Cambodia becoming a battleground of the Indo-China war. An important aspect of this tragic war was the interaction of Khmer and Vietnamese allies on both sides. After the 1972 Communist offensive in Vietnam caused the departure of most Vietnamese Communist and ARVN troops from Cambodia, the 1970-75 war took on the character of a Khmer civil war. It was probably then that there began to be very serious strains on relations between Khmer and Vietnamese Communists.

I have argued elsewhere that the essential difference in the Right and Left factions of the Khmer educated elite is in how they have tended to view their Vietnamese neighbours(2). The Right has long viewed Vietnam as the major enemy of Cambodia, one that justifies an alliance with the strongest possible major Power that can provide Cambodia some protection. The Left has taken exactly the reverse position. During their first period of limited power (1962-66), the "young leftists" frequently clashed with the out-of-favour Right on such issues as forming a common front with Vietnam against American imperialism and allowing the Vietnamese Communists easy access to the Vietnamese minority in Cambodia. However, in their second period of ascendancy, the Khmer leftists seem to be moving toward the traditional rightist position, – alliance with the strongest outside Power (China) and close ties with Bangkok in order to resist Vietnamese encroachment. Many specialists now view the attack on the *Mayaguez* as part of a pattern of Khmer Rouge assertion of Cambodian territorial rights, on land and in the Gulf.

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IN THAILAND in the late 1960s, when virtually all of Vietnam was subjected to massive wartime disruption, most of the 70,000 or so people of Vietnamese origin there seem to have concluded (if they had not done so earlier) that they would be better off remaining in Thailand than moving back to any part of Indo-China. This was indicated by a sudden upsurge in the rate of intermarriage between Vietnamese refugees and Thais in some parts of North-east Thailand — intermarriage being one of the easiest ways for a refugee to strengthen his foothold in the country. Moreover, there were signs that Thai officials were more prepared than previously to bend the rather strict immigration and naturalization laws to let all but a few Vietnamese (who were said to have engaged in subversion) remain in Thailand.

This approach was never officially announced; if in fact it was adopted, it could always be disowned, slowed down, or reversed. But there were advantages to letting the well-behaved majority of Vietnamese stay: their skills were an economic asset, and trying to round them all up would have been extremely difficult, costly, and disruptive — likely to add to the subversion problem in Thailand (by creating disaffection) and certain to embitter Thai-Vietnamese relations.

All available evidence indicates that no important links have been established between the Thai-Lao insurgents (backed by Hanoi) in North-east Thailand and the Vietnamese refugees who have lived in the North-east since 1946. Ethnic differences (and complex rivalries of Vietnamese and Chinese agents) may account partly for this fact. But I suspect the main reason for it is that Thai officials have not pressed the Vietnamese refugees too hard, and the refugees have realized that abstaining from politics was the surest guarantee of a comfortable life.

From time to time, however, the Vietnamese refugees have been the subject of strongly worded statements by Hanoi, Bangkok, and Saigon. In 1959, the Thai and North Vietnamese Governments agreed (through their Red Cross Societies) to repatriate the Vietnamese to Hanoi, and over 30,000 were sent there before the operation ceased in 1964. All three Governments have at times tried to manipulate the refugees and have reacted violently to their neighbours' efforts in this regard.

By words and deeds of this sort, the Thai Government has pursued several objectives: it has tried to rid itself of the Vietnamese refugees by repatriation; it has tried to create respect for Thai

laws and customs on the part of the refugees and other ethnic minority groups in Thailand; it has, at times, tried to use the refugee issue as a basis for establishing a more civilized working relationship with Hanoi — either *de facto* or *de jure;* it has, at times, tried to demonstrate that it is nobody's puppet and it may, at times, have sought to stir up nationalistic sentiment on the part of the Thai people. However, this last aim is not typical of Thai political behaviour.

Since the US bombing halt in 1968, there have been frequent announcements by Thai leaders of an impending agreement with Hanoi, either on repatriating the refugees or on normalizing relations or both. Of the objectives listed above, perhaps the most important has been to signal the United States that it must keep Thai interests in mind as it ended its involvement in Vietnam.

Nevertheless, China was the first Asian Communist country to normalize relations with Thailand (in the summer of 1975) and by year's end the public positions of both Hanoi and Bangkok seemed less conducive to normal diplomatic relations than at any time since the 1968 US bombing halt.

The ostensible subject of Radio Hanoi's campaign of abuse against Thailand was a series of violent attacks on Vietnamese communities in Nong Khai province in late November 1975. As reported by the Thai Press, it appears that Thai officials, at the provincial or district level, sought to restore Thailand's prestige (damaged by clashes with the Pathet Lao) by inciting these attacks by Thai youths against the highly vulnerable Vietnamese communities in Nong Khai. The attacks, according to Press reports, resulted in the burning of some 150 Vietnamese homes. The incident was almost certainly not planned or authorized by responsible political leaders of the Thai Government. Premier Kukrit Pramoj ordered local authorities to prevent a repetition of the attacks and offered indemnities to the victims.

The episode was probably less cause than effect of the complex changes in interstate relations taking place in the region. It also clearly reflected the underlying restlessness and increasing violence of Thai political life. But the Prime Minister's handling of the incident also shows his Government's increased self-confidence since the normalization of relations with China and later with Cambodia. Probably most Thai people regard these moves as an extremely adroit response to the Communist victories in Indo-China.

Thus, Kukrit's success in dealing with Peking and Phnom Penh seems to explain his Government's inability to develop *de facto* or *de jure* relations with the DRV. Judging from Press reports and public statements, Vietnamese Communists appear less interested than the Thais in normalizing relations. Hanoi insists upon the return of aircraft now in Thailand that were flown out at the time of Thieu's collapse. The Thais have impounded the planes, and they insist that the subject is unrelated to the issue of diplomatic relations. The United States (having removed the more sophisticated aircraft that were flown to Thailand from South Vietnam last spring) holds that the remaining planes should also revert to US ownership.

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NEW Vietnamese refugees, probably numbering between five and ten thousand, reached Thai soil between April and December 1975. Most of them fled South Vietnam in small vessels, were interned in refugee camps operated by the Thai Government, and were evacuated within a few weeks or months to the United States. These "new refugees" were evidently not an issue in Thai-Vietnamese relations during 1975. However, it may be worth summarizing the main facts about the status of this fairly large group of Vietnamese who passed through Thailand in 1975, as well as the thousand or so who remained there at year's end. They may have a bearing on future Thai-Vietnamese (and US-Vietnamese) relations; and they certainly are an important subject in current Thai-US relations. (We have already noted that it was older Vietnamese settlers in Thailand who became embroiled in Thai-Vietnamese relations in late November 1975.)

When new Vietnamese refugees began to arrive in Thailand in April 1975, there appears to have been an informal commitment by the US Government to evacuate them to the United States. The Thai Government evidently did not press the United States, at this stage, to evacuate Cambodian refugees, who were arriving in much larger numbers (about 20,000 by year's end) or Lao and Meo (between 40,000 and 50,000 by the end of 1975).

During April and May, the United States did not apply any special criteria of eligibility in choosing which Vietnamese refugees to evacuate from Thailand. It simply evacuated as many as it could, usually with a period of processing on Guam before they reached the United States. While awaiting departure from Thailand, the refugees were concentrated in four or five camps (operated by the Thai Navy and Ministry of Interior) in southern Thailand. Reports of living conditions in these camps vary considerably although they were evidently much better than conditions in camps provided for Khmer and Lao refugees.

Around June, pressures from the US Congress resulted in the imposition of stricter criteria for choosing which Vietnamese refugees in Thailand to admit to the United States. For a time, the only refugees admitted were former US Government

employees, or those with relatives in the US, or Vietnamese whose lives would be endangered if they returned to South Vietnam.

In August, all Vietnamese refugees in Thailand were moved to one consolidated camp, at Vayama, near the US base at Sattahip. And later, the criteria for evacuating Vietnamese refugees from Thailand to the US were relaxed again so that virtually all could be considered for admission. However, a controversy arose between the US Immigration and Naturalization Service and the State Department; the former wanted to curtail arrivals of refugees, while the latter wanted to admit as many of the new Vietnamese refugees in Thailand as possible to lessen the pressure on the Thai Government and to reunite families.

By year's end, over 7,000 Vietnamese refugees had been flown to the United States from Thailand, and some 1,000 remained in the camp at Vayama. (About 3,000 refugees from Laos and Cambodia had also been flown to the United States from Thailand.) On a case-by-case basis, the State Department and US Immigration and Naturalization Service were negotiating which refugees still in Thailand (and other countries) to admit to the United States. It was agreed that a total of 3,600 refugees, mainly Meo, from Laos would be admitted to the United States. However, this would not do much to relieve the Thai Government's plight of being the unwilling host to some 40,000 Meo and 20,000 Khmer refugees, whose numbers were still increasing in December. The presence of these refugees was a major irritant in Thailand's relations with Laos and Cambodia.

Since the initial large influx of new Vietnamese refugees to Thailand in April and May 1975 (almost all by sea or air), some have continued to arrive by various means. Probably a large percentage of Vietnamese refugees who entered Thailand in the second half of 1975 were former residents of Laos. (Some may also have come from Cambodia, where perhaps 50,000 to 100,000 Vietnamese remained in spite of the forced exodus of most Vietnamese from Cambodia in 1970.) Those arriving from Laos would be likely to have contacts in the Vietnamese communities on the Thai side of the Mekong River. However, hundreds of them also made their way to Bangkok.

Thai officials sought to isolate as many of these people as they could in the refugee camp at Vayama. And Catholic priests were active in seeking US approval for their admission to the United States. Largely because the United States has been willing to admit such large numbers of the new Vietnamese refugees, they have not become a significant irritant in Thai-Vietnamese relations. (France and Australia have also accepted a certain number of the new Vietnamese refugees in Thailand.) However, as the November 1975 episode in Nong Khai province shows, the presence of over 70,000 Vietnamese in eastern provinces of Thailand is likely to play an important role in Thai-Vietnamese relations for years to come.

Notes and References

1. Peter A. Poole, *The Vietnamese in Thailand, a Historical Perspective,* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970; and also my article "The Vietnamese in Cambodia and Thailand: Their Role in Interstate Relations", *Asian Survey* (April, 1974), pp. 325-37.

2. Chapter entitled "Communism and Ethnic Conflict in Cambodia, 1960-1975", in Joseph J. Zasloff and MacAlister Brown (editors), *Communism in Indochina: New Perspectives,* Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1975.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: *The author, a development economist, provides an analysis of the economic problems of Thailand's South, an area on whose political problems attention is more frequently focused.*

Land and Development in South Thailand

D.J.W. Berkoff

CONTROL over land is a critical issue wherever development takes place, but in Thailand today it is taking on a more than usually crucial importance. Nowhere is this more true than in the remaining forest areas that are suitable for agricultural settlement. A particular combination of political circumstance and the approaching end of a frontier type of development involves wider issues than simply the use to which the land is put, and subjects those who attempt to control it to a complex of different pressures.

This is well illustrated in South Thailand where such areas are still fairly widespread and where elements of a frontier society still exist. Using the region as an example, this article attempts to place the occupation of new land in its overall historical context and to discuss the changes that are now taking place. It begins by outlining the nature of past political and economic development, and relates how the latter was crucially dependent on the availability of surplus land. It goes on to discuss the problems and pressures to which a rapid decline in this surplus gives rise, assesses how these have been dealt with by the political authorities, and ends by considering the limited range of options open for further initiatives in trying to control the situation.

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THAI penetration into what is now South Thailand began as early as the thirteenth century, but it was only with the suppression of the Kingdom of Pattani in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that control over the region was finally achieved. Even then, Governors of southern provinces, who were often of non-Thai descent, were frequently able to establish semi-independent fiefdoms, holding their authority by virtue of the Thai crown but exercising it in a relatively independent fashion. At times of central weakness this might emerge as open rebellion, while local conflict between Thai and Muslim satrapies was even more frequent(1,2, 3).

Such independence was not of course unique to the South. Nevertheless a number of features helped to give it relative strength in the region. In the Moslem areas, differing cultural practices and loyalties meant minimal identification with the Thai nation state, and the more loosely-held provinces in what is now northern Malaysia were able to take advantage of growing Anglo-Thai rivalry to preserve, for a time, their effective independence(4). Even in the predominantly Thai-speaking areas, relative isolation helped to foster a sense of difference: communications with Central Thailand were largely by sea, and long distances added a political dimension to the inherent economic self-sufficiency of the traditional communities.

As for the rest of Thailand, this independence was curtailed by King Chulalongkorn's reforms at the turn of the century, and these marked a turning point in the evolution of the region's administration and character. The creation of a centralized system of local government put an end to the often oppressive power of the feudal Governors and contributed significantly to the emergence of an independent peasantry, now such a notable feature of Thai society(3). In the South, these socio-political developments had particular importance since they established favourable pre-conditions for the spread of smallholder rubber.

Despite its integration within a centralized

overnment system, the South has probably retained a reater sense of its previous independence than have ther regions. Its relative geographical isolation emains, only partly relieved by improvements in ommunications, while the rubber and tin industries re virtually alone in having direct links abroad which ypass Bangkok. In addition, while the removal of ppressive rulers may have been welcomed in general, the Moslem areas these often provided cultural adership to offset any economic depredations; their placement by alien Thai-speaking civil servants was no nprovement, and the strains and resentments thus inoduced have continued to feed dissidence and unrest ver since(2, 5). Even in Thai-speaking areas, bureauats and policemen, usually speaking a different dialct, have alienated much of the rural population and used widespread antipathy towards Bangkok. Finally, round off this picture of persisting separateness, the cal Chinese are — apart perhaps from the Kuomintang remnants in the North — the least assimilated in hailand, looking in many ways to Malaysia rather than angkok; this has been a significant factor in enabling e Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) to maintain its ases on Thai soil, especially amongst the Chinese rubber planters of Betong district(5).

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POLITICAL independence in the traditional society was mirrored by a large measure of conomic self-sufficiency. As in most parts of South-east sia, economic life was based on wet rice cultivation upported by a range of subsidiary activities including shore fishing, livestock husbandry and some tree and on-rice annual cropping. Settlement was concenated mainly in towns and villages spread down the ast coast, accessible both to the sea and to the alluvial addy-growing plains.

Prior to the introduction of rubber, economic hange had come slowly. As early as the seventeenth nd eighteenth centuries, European traders established ctories on both sides of the isthmus, while the growth the tin industry in the late nineteenth century added an existing slow movement of population inland and the West coast. It was, however, only with the dvent of rubber that major changes in the economic ructure of the region began to take place. Whereas revious innovations had largely supplemented an nchanged subsistence economy, rubber opened up a ew dimension in smallholder society itself.

The crop was introduced in 1901 by Phaya atsadanupradit (Kaw Sim Bee na Ranong), a famous overnor of Trang, and was eagerly adopted by local hinese, suffering at the time from a decline in the rice of tin, and other factors(6). They were soon itated by neighbouring smallholders, with the crop so spreading from Malaya into the Moslem areas. tifel(7) has shown that, using reasonable assumptions, three days tapping in the early part of the century provided an income equivalent to the average farmer's annual rice crop. The financial incentives were therefore substantial.

Four main factors explain the ease with which smallholders were able to adopt the new crop: surplus land, under-employed labour, the resilience of the rubber tree itself and the marketability of rubber as a commodity. Upland land, which had little economic value in the traditional economy, was abundant along the margins of the settled areas. Before King Chulalongkorn's reforms, land in theory belonged to the King who gave farmers and others the right to occupation in return for a proportion of the resulting benefits. These "taxes" were raised through the system of tax farming, while unoccupied land was largely bonded over to feudal Governors in their role as "tenants-in-chief"(7, 8). With the abolition of feudal practice, unoccupied land became vested in the State and rudimentary beginnings were made to regularize private land ownership. In practice, however, both before and after the reforms, unofficial occupation of forest land was relatively easy and, if anything, the release of farmers from feudal pressures made them more willing to take advantage of their opportunities. The spread of rubber therefore, coming as it did soon after the reforms, faced a minimal land constraint and farmers were able to lay hands on new land with little difficulty.

The second major factor favouring the new crop was the availability of surplus labour in the traditional economy. Rice has notoriously high labour demands at the crucial land preparation/transplanting and harvesting/milling periods, and it was these therefore that dictated the equilibrium balance between cultivated (mainly paddy) land and population. The result was severe underemployment especially during the dry season but also while the rice was growing. With few exceptions (for instance, fishing along the coasts) opportunities for making use of this surplus labour were simply not available. The abolition of slavery and of the compulsory provision of labour to the feudal authorities added to this surplus (3) so that rubber was widely welcomed for its employment-creating effects. Land clearance falls naturally during the dry season, and tapping, although it is a year-round activity, tends to be restricted during the rains. Both the major labour demands for the new crop were therefore complementary to those of paddy cultivation.

The third decisive factor lay in the nature of the rubber tree itself and its resilience in the face of any small-holder malpractices. Modern technology has of course developed delicate high-yielding strains that require heavy outlays on fertilizer and other inputs, and which are susceptible to damage and disease. In the early years, however, the varieties available were close to their wild Brazilian ancestors. Lack of attention during the immature period had little effect on yields and, although higher output could no doubt

be obtained by careful cultivation practices, the returns from even relatively low yields were very substantial. The traditional farmer lay outside the money economy and there was no way that he could provide investment capital; nor did he have the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure high yields. What he did have was his labour and access to spare land. In return for labour that would otherwise be largely unemployed, he received a very considerable increase in income which left his traditional livelihood almost entirely unaffected. Because of this, the nil return during the six-year immature period mattered little, while the gaps in tapping due to rice cultivation if anything enhanced the daily return at other times.

Lastly, rubber is a high value, non-perishable commodity which can be marketed easily. The geography of the region, with its spinal rail and road systems and long coast line, favoured the spread of rubber, which can extend further from the transport system than almost any comparable crop. Nevertheless, there are limits to what is possible, and poor communications have undoubtedly restricted its entry into the more remote areas.

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THESE four factors proved a powerful combination, and by 1970 rubber accounted for almost 50 per cent of the region's gross cultivated area(9). Since foreign investment was disallowed, it developed largely under smallholder ownership, and such estates as do exist have characteristics in some ways closer to those of large smallholdings than of foreign-owned estates in Malaysia. In the early years the crop was grown along the edges of the settled alluvial plains but, as the area expanded, it was necessary to move inland until the distances became too great for daily tapping. Temporary, and ultimately permanent, migration became necessary with the result that population moved inland and new growth areas were established(11).

Migration occurs in different ways but has probably followed two general patterns. According to the first pattern, a paddy farmer (and/or his sons) moves temporarily during the dry season, clears as much forest as can be managed, plants the area with rubber and returns home for the initial tasks of the rice cropping season. During the immature period occasional visits might be made, but a permanent home only becomes necessary once tapping has commenced. This might be occupied by a son or grandson who usually maintains work connections with the original home, at least until with the passage of time a new household has become established and subsistence cropping has been developed.

With greater distances, and increased competition for land, this gradual process of migration has become less practicable and a more permanent initial move — say by an elder son with little immediate prospect of inheritance — has now probably becom the dominant pattern; indeed, for Governme settlement schemes such a move is a necessa condition. In these cases, land has to be clear initially for upland rice and other annual crops, ar only once subsistence requirements have been satisfie can land be cleared for rubber. During the immatu period, the holding is upgraded and — where possib — paddy land is developed.

Whichever pattern is adopted, the cruci complementarity between rice and rubber is usuall maintained. It is true that, after the move, rubb tapping normally becomes the dominant econom activity, in contrast to its more subsidiary role alo the margins of the alluvial plains where rice itself ma be grown for sale. Nevertheless, income from rubber still largely additional to a subsistence base.

Although the latter may be less assured in inlan areas, the combination has undoubtedly led to higher average standard of living than in most oth rural parts of Thailand where year-round activities a usually unavailable. The relationship between rice an rubber is well illustrated by the fact that betwe 70-80 per cent of all farmers in South Thailand ow paddy or upland rice land whereas only 50-60 per ce own rubber(12, 13): allowing for other crops, the figures show that most rubber farmers also own ri fields.

Movement of population, the expansion of t cash economy and the processing needs of the rubb industry have together created a demand for servi far greater than in the traditional subsisten economy. Inland commercial towns such as Thu Song, Hat Yai and Yala have expanded rapidly leavi the older coastal settlements of Nakhon Sri Thamm rat, Songkhla and Pattani as relative backwaters, th dominant functions being the provision of administ tive, social and port facilities. The new towns ha grown up primarily in response to the needs of th rural hinterlands and they have yet to set in moti any true process of urbanization. It is true that oth high return industries such as tin, offshore fishin forestry and tourism have played a part in diversifyi the region's economy, but it is still rubber, and t rural-to-rural migration to which it gives rise, th remains the primary economic activity and moti force.

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OF THE four major factors favouring the spre of smallholder rubber, only the first — that free surplus land — has fundamentally changed sin the beginning of the century. Under-employment is anything increasing, while the characteristics of l yielding seedling rubber still make it first choice f upland areas whenever the farmer is left to himse and as a commodity rubber remains easily markete

Why is it that smallholders remain committed to low yielding seedling rubber when much higher yielding clonal varieties are now available? It is not in the main through ignorance since the latter have been widely publicized through the Government's replanting scheme and in other ways. Much more important are the features which favoured the early spread of seedling rubber, in particular its minimal development costs compared with the major capital investment required by the new technologies. This is illustrated in Table 1 which compares the two alternative cash flows for a 15 rai (2.4 hectare) holding over a 25-year period. The assumptions on which these figures are based are discussed in the South Thailand Regional Planning Study's sector report on rubber(14), and include a long-term rubber price assumption of 10 baht per kilogram, f.o.b. Thailand.

It is not the exact figures given in Table 1 so much as the general pattern that is significant. In return for major capital investment during the immature period, clonal rubber gives much the larger income once production commences. In terms of the national economy, this investment is more than justified(14, 15) but to the farmer the initial costs are usually prohibitive. In most cases he simply has not got the money. Borrowing, except at excessive moneylender rates, is normally ruled out by the absence of long-term lending institutions and even more so by the lack of adequate collateral. In any case, even at subsidized rates, the financial charges would delay a positive return beyond a reasonable time horizon. If to this is added formidable price and other uncertainties, insecurity of land tenure, and the additional labour and skills required for clonal rubber, it is not surprising that seedling varieties are almost invariably chosen. Clonal rubber without investment in fertilizer during the immature period and, without extra skills and care, is worse than useless, so that the farmer is behaving rationally within his own context by going for the low productivity alternative.

In the early years abundant land, few crop alternatives and a limited yield differential between estates and smallholders, meant that the spread of low productivity rubber mattered little. In fact, under the circumstances, it became the main practicable engine of growth and contributed decisively to higher production and incomes. However, this situation no longer prevails: land is becoming scarce, high return alternative crops such as oil palm are now feasible and decades of research have evolved rubber varieties that give yields far greater than those derived from the seed of old plantations. Expropriation of settled land is largely impracticable if that land newly occupied by seedling rubber is pre-empted for a generation, a generation of low output and low incomes.

Faced with this situation, the Government recognized that farmers would require assistance if high yielding rubber was to be established on any scale. To date, such assistance has been largely confined to the replanting of old plantations rather than to the extension of rubber into new areas. The Rubber Plantation Aid Fund Act was passed in 1960 at a time when the first major areas were ending their productive life (Table 2). Under this act, a cess is raised on all rubber exports to finance replanting grants. These cover not only the material costs of establishing clonal rubber, but also a greater part of the labour costs during the immature period — labour that can be supplied by the farmer himself.

Survival during the immature period is in fact a major problem for the farmer considering replanting. Even when contact with the ancestral home has been maintained, it almost certainly can no longer provide opportunities for paddy employment. Rubber has become in most cases the primary source of income and reduction to a standard of living based on a subsistence plot may be unacceptable. Replanting can of course be done in stages but for the smaller farms this may not be feasible and in any case is only a partial solution. Competition with itinerant sharetappers for tapping and other paid labour is growing, brought on by increasing population pressure as the safety valve of surplus land comes to an end. Despite the grant, therefore, the smallest farmers find it difficult to participate in the scheme, and continue to tap for a lower and lower return until they are forced to drop to an even lower standard of living or to sell their land.

For the settler moving onto new land, lack of income during the immature period is actually, or at least perceived to be, a less serious problem. Nevertheless, the financial constraint is the same or even greater: the new settler has probably moved because of lack of income and must provide for transport, a new house and other expenses while the replanter may have saved out of previous tapping income or be able to replant in stages. Even in Government settlement schemes, the assistance provided is far lower than that extended under the replanting scheme and is for the most part in loan rather than grant form. Since by law a replanting grant can only be given to an existing rubber farmer, the new settler is seldom in a position to establish a high yielding rubber plantation. The effect is the continued spread of inefficient low-return agriculture and, with the end of the surplus land in sight, this process will ultimately inhibit the prospects for major diversification into high-return, estate-type crops such as oil palm.

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THE underlying factors behind the spread of rubber and new settlement have already been discussed. I shall now review the overall picture in

terms of the land balance for the region as a whole, and demonstrate how far the extension of new settlement has gone, and deliniate the opportunities that still remain.

For many years the Government failed to realize the extent to which rubber had spread. Production estimates were derived by adjusting export figures and, until the 1963 Agricultural Census(12) apparently provided a firm figure, estimates of area were based on an unrealistically high yield assumption. In the light of the Census, the official Ministry of Agriculture estimate for South Thailand was increased from 3.32 million rai (0.53 million hectares) in 1963 to 4.55 million rai (0.73 million hectares) in 1965. The Census figure in its turn was shown to be a serious under-estimate by the interpretation of 1966-68 aerial photographs undertaken by the Rubber Research Centre(16, 17). This important survey resulted in an estimate for 1972 of 7.78 million rai (1.24 million hectares): even this may be a slight under-estimate(14) although the actual figure is still probably within the survey's statistical limits of accuracy. The realization of the extent to which rubber has spread has not only major implications for replanting and other policies, but also implies that there is less land for new settlement than previously thought. Confirmation of the importance of rubber came in 1973 when production responded to the high prices, and rubber became — for one year — Thailand's most valuable export.

The Rubber Research Centre also provided estimates(16, 17) showing the historical pattern of rubber development — a crucial factor establishing the subsequent levels of replanting required. Table 2 summarizes these for all Thailand. The South accounts for about 90 per cent, the balance being in the South-east region.

By the time the depression of the 1920s had given rubber its first major setback, 886,000 rai (nearly 150,000 hectares) had been planted. With the collapse in world prices, new plantings virtually ceased and production stagnated. Nevertheless, capacity created by planting in the 1920s allowed a quick response in production once prices had recovered, and this was accompanied by further increases in the planted area up till the Second World War. The last period of expansion, and by far the most important in terms of the area planted, was set in motion by the Korean War commodity boom. With varying levels of intensity, this has been continuing ever since, although declining prices and an end to freely available land resulted in a very considerable deceleration in the rate of new plantings during the 1960s.

Table 2 demonstrates that rubber on a large scale is a fairly recent phenomenon. During the past twenty five years, and in particular during the 1950s when the area under rubber more than doubled, th land use pattern and the overall land balance in th region has altered drastically. Table 3 provid estimates made by the South Thailand Region Planning Study of the general picture in 1973(10 These figures refer to gross areas of major land u and are not directly comparable with those given Table 2: the latter are adjusted to reflect actu planted area whereas the former are derived fro those areas shown by aerial photography to predominantly a particular form of land use. Th former also include a category of mixed low intensi use which is typically found in areas of recent partially abandoned settlement and for which straight-forward classification is possible.

By no means all the remaining forest a swamp areas are suitable for agricultural develo ment and some that are might better be reserved f watershed protection and other uses. The Sou Thailand Regional Planning Study made an attem to identify those appropriate for organized sett ment, deliniating seven major development areas the northern part of the region(10, 11). These cov 10,775 square kilometres of which a little more th 3,000 square kilometres remained under forest 1973. In the southern part, no major new develo ment areas were identified although smaller forest areas suitable for agriculture are widespread throug out the region and extensive areas of low intens land use need upgrading.

The absence of new major settlement areas the southern provinces reflects their longer history paddy-based agriculture, and the resulting hig density of population. The alluvial plains suitable wet rice cultivation are much less widespread to t North and West where they account for only 5 p cent of the total land area compared to nearly per cent in the South (Table 3). Since rubber fi moved into upland areas accessible to the tradition settlements, it is not surprising that rubber is a more widespread in the southern provinces. T forests, on the other hand, account for a relativ small proportion of the land area and are larg confined to inaccessible steepland unsuitable human settlement.

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THE emergence of a land constraint is m evident in the Moslem provinces of the South, which are among the most densely popula in the region and to which rubber came ear Whereas a generation ago, the displaced farmer w up into the hills in search of land, he is now reduc to working as a sharetapper on established plan tions. Migration further afield is restricted cultural reasons. Work opportunities will inevita become more competitive and population pressure already giving rise to incipient signs of agricultu

volution with land fragmentation, increased tenancy and forced migration to the towns in search of work all beginning to take hold.

These problems are less immediate elsewhere in the region although, with traditional migration patterns continuing, an end to the land surplus is in sight. Road construction programmes in the northern part, especially in the Central Lowlands of Surat Thani and Krabi, are opening up the last substantial areas identified by the Regional Planning Study as suitable for agricultural development and these are rapidly being occupied. With the exception of a lower proportion of paddy land, the land use pattern of the northern provinces can be expected to approximate more closely to that of the southern provinces with the forests largely confined to mountainous terrain.

To summarize, land pressure in South Thailand is still less pronounced than in most other parts of the country and much less so than in many other developing countries. However, under the impact of the road building programme and the continued spread of inefficient smallholder agriculture, the land surplus is rapidly declining. Trends that have already begun to emerge in the southern provinces can be expected to extend progressively throughout the region and the last decades of this century will inevitably be characterized by major shifts in the process of development and economic growth. Recognition of this should have important implications for the policies that the Government adopts, not only towards the areas still to be inhabited, but more generally towards the region as a whole.

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GOVERNMENT policies on the whole have been characterized by *laissez-faire* attitudes. Development has been left largely to private initiative and, apart from the provision of social and economic infrastructure, public involvement has tended to be in response to the problems caused by development rather than with the aim of initiating it in the first place. This is well illustrated by the history of the rubber industry(6, 7): export taxes were raised, and some desultory control measures imposed under the terms of the international cartel agreement of the 1930s, but it was not until the problems of ageing rubber forced themselves on the authorities that positive intervention took place. Despite the fact that new plantings face equivalent constraints to those under which replanting occurs, no comparable assistance is provided. New plantings are not perceived to be an immediate problem and do not force themselves on a largely passive Government.

If new settlement is uncontrolled, it follows that neither are the forests protected. This is not for want of legislation. Chalermrath Khambanonda(9) itemizes a whole succession of laws and regulations going back to the Forest Protection Act of 1897. He argues convincingly that, although there are defects due to the lack of a unified conservation and protection law, the principal problem is law enforcement. This in its turn arises out of the passive nature of Government and its inability to formulate or carry through positive control policies. In contrast to North Thailand, however, there still appears to be time to reserve some high priority areas, possibly by concentrating on these rather than failing in the attempt to protect the forests as a whole.

As is to be expected from what has already been said, the passive approach is further illustrated by the practice — if not the theory — of land registration procedures. The authorities are very reluctant to expropriate unofficial settlers. Titles and certificates are issued to those already in occupation of land rather than to those applying for land in new areas, and in some ways the worst of both worlds is attained. On the one hand insecurity of tenure affects the settler's willingness to invest in his new holding, and on the other the authorities almost invariably end up by recognizing his right to the land. Where conflicts occur, for instance between the settler and a mining company or Government department, the former has proved almost impossible to shift without compensation, and this has given rise to a new "industry" with settlers moving from place to place (complete in some cases with fully grown trees!) to obtain the compensation almost always given to "save trouble". Only in conflicts with other settlers, or with powerful men willing to use illegal strong arm tactics, is occupation less than nine-tenths of the law. In fact some insurgency problems are almost certainly associated with land grabbing, since illegality and conflict in any frontier society are usually accompanied by a desire to avoid official inspection.

It is of course not only in new areas that tenure is uncertain, and there have been serious delays in the procedures laid down by the Land Code(18). Title deeds are only issued where a cadastral survey has been undertaken and, in the absence of this, the next most secure title is the Nor Sor 3 which can be inherited and, subject to certain procedures, sold. Where unlawful settlement has taken place before a specified year, or within certain other limitations, a Sor Kor 1 — a type of squatter's title — can be obtained, and this can be converted to a more secure title provided the land is not needed for a public purpose and does not form part of gazetted forest land. Finally, a Baichong is issued where a farmer applies for new land officially: this conveys no title rights but, if the land is developed satisfactorily, can lead to a Nor Sor 3 or title deed. Table 4 provides Royal Thai Survey Department estimates of the distribution of holdings by type of certificate in South Thailand(19).

According to Table 4, less than 2 per cent of the registered area is covered by a title deed and only about 20 per cent by a Nor Sor 3. Even this understates the true lack of security: a 1964-66 survey carried out in Songkhla(20) suggested that 11 per cent of cultivated land was unregistered. Since smallholders tend to understate the area owned to avoid tax or because it is owned illegally, and since the proportion of unregistered land could on average be higher than for a long-settled province like Songkhla, the proportion unregistered for the region as a whole is likely to be even greater than 11 per cent.

Most lawful settlement of new land in Thailand has resulted from individuals applying to the Land Department under the procedures laid down by the Land Code(21). In addition, however, the Government has a number of agencies involved in organizing orderly settlement of previously unoccupied land, the most important of which are the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) in the Ministry of the Interior and the Department of Co-operatives Promotion (DCP) in the Ministry of Agriculture. These are probably relatively more important in the South than in Thailand as a whole. They both develop smallholder settlements and have no powers for undertaking public estate agriculture.

The approach adopted by the settlement agencies has been "merely to provide the land and the basic infrastructure, leaving it to the settlers to develop the holdings allotted to them from their own resources"(22). Some ancilliary services are provided, for instance clonal rubber nurseries, animal husbandry units and a rudimentary extension service, but these seldom make a substantial impact. A loan is given to assist in the development of the new holding and this ensures an easier and more certain move than if the settler migrates under his own steam. Nevertheless, the agricultural standards are seldom much higher than in the surrounding areas and the emphasis is on regularizing a natural process rather than on establishing high return agriculture. As pointed out above, this results in the odd contrast between an expensive rubber replanting programme operated by one arm of Government and shoestring settlements operated by others.

DPW are making some progress towards improved agriculture on their settlements although shortage of funds is a major constraint. The "Southern Land Settlements" (established in 1964 with the aim of settling sensitive border areas with a high proportion of Thai-speakers) have recently been the subject of a planning study(23) and new settlements are being planned comprehensively from the start(24). The loan, notably on the unique oil palm settlement in Satun, has also been raised to more realistic levels. However, in response to criticism of their past performance, emphasis is being placed on upgrading the existing settlements rath than on obtaining access to new areas. Since the cover about 2 million rai gross (including 1. million rai in the Southern Land Settlements), this undoubtedly the correct policy, but it does me that DPW is unlikely to play a significant role opening up the Central Lowlands and other ma new areas.

In contrast, large new areas have recently be alloted to the DCP. The DCP's settlement divisi already operates two large settlements in the Cent Lowlands and four smaller ones elsewhere: 1974/75 a further six settlements were established the region, virtually doubling the gross area a bringing the total to more than 1 million rai. T resources of the division are severely limited and t settlers are left to their own devices to an ev greater extent than on DPW settlements. Loans a passed through co-operatives and only minim services are provided by the central settlement offi It follows that, unless its resources are grea expanded and its planning and execution capabil greatly supplemented, the DCP is unlikely to prove satisfactory instrument for furthering high retu agriculture.

While "desirable" patterns of land owners can in theory be established in areas of n settlement through either registration or pub settlement procedures, additional powers of acqui tion and expropriation are required if this becon an objective in areas already lawfully settled. Th land is perhaps fortunate that it does not have dominant land owning class and in South Thaila only a small proportion of farmers rent land(12, 1 In the Central Plain, however, tenancy problems becoming severe(25) and even within a smallhold society inequitable land distribution, fragmentati and landlessness can occur. With rising populati these problems will inevitably increase and extend other regions and the urgent pressures of Cent Thailand have already resulted in a major Gove ment initiative to implement land reform throu the passage of the 1975 Agricultural Land Refo Act(26).

This was not of course the first attempt alleviate these problems. Tenancy legislation da back at least to the 1950 "Act Controlling the H of Paddy Land" and the Land Code itself set do limits to the amount of land that could be ow ed(18). However, these measures proved almost imp sible to implement(25) and, with many exceptions any case allowed, the limit on land ownership was fact subsequently abandoned. Other attempts ensure desirable patterns of land ownership, instance through the voluntary procedures of la consolidation within irrigation schemes(27), ha also had only limited impact even where they ha been successful within their own terms.

The 1975 Land Reform Act followed a renew- attempt to control tenancy in the 1974 Rent ntrol Act and the related 1974 Land Consolida- n Act. Together these measures represent a major w departure and, in contrast to previous legisla- n, there seems to be a good chance that they will effective in practice. The significance of the Land form Act lies not only in its provisions for the propriation of land that is unused or is in excess of at allowed under the act, but also in the powers ven to the new Agricultural Land Reform Commit- s and Office to distribute State land. Potentially, erefore, an area such as the Central Lowlands uld be declared an "area for land reform" under e terms of the act and, not only could existing ldings be redistributed as necessary, but forest nd could be allocated for both public settlements d for distribution to individual farmers under the ms of the Land Code.

Implementation of the 1975 act has got off to slow start and, in view of its primary pre-occupa- n with the problems of redistribution, it is not prising that the first "area for land reform" lies in ntral Thailand. Indeed, the immense task faced in e Central Plain makes it unlikely that the new ice will be in a position to tackle the problems of ordinated settlement in new areas for many years come, even if in the light of its experience such volvement was considered appropriate. In any case, has not been given powers to control, or even cessarily co-ordinate, the activities of other Govern- nt departments and agencies in designated areas. us, although its scope appears at first sight to be re suitable for overall co-ordinated land develop- nt planning than, say, the settlement agencies, in actice its ability and willingness to effect such anning is likely to be limited. An institutional gap erefore remains to be filled if the large areas of rest and unoccupied land are to be planned in a ordinated and rational manner before the process spontaneous squatter intrusion has finally made s impossible.

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THERE seems little doubt that past trends will continue until all land suitable for agricultural velopment in South Thailand has been occupied. e pressures and traditions of migration are too ong for any conceivable Government to resist them lly, even if this were desirable. In fact, the onomic and social returns from agriculture are most invariably much higher than from fores- (11) and, on these grounds, the forests should be tained only where they fulfil a more pressing tershed management, scientific or aesthetic pur- se. The question is not therefore whether or not rge areas of forest should be converted to agricul- re but rather how this should be done: by ontaneous smallholder intrusion, by co-ordinated and planned development, or by some compromise between these two extremes.

In theory, co-ordinated and planned development is no doubt the ideal. This would seek to optimize the growth in production and incomes through orderly settlement and through the promotion of high return agriculture and crop diversification. Transport and other infrastructural investments would be related to the evolving pattern of rural settlement, and new towns and services located accordingly. Essential forest areas would be retained and allowance made for other special uses and requirements. If successful, this would enable such areas to absorb a greater population, living at a higher standard of living, than would be the case for uncontrolled development, while the higher rate of out-migration from the East coast paddy areas would delay the process of agricultural involution and provide more time for alternative income- and employment-generating developments to take place. This was the strategy recommended by the South Thailand Regional Planning Study: to fill the institutional gap discussed above, this study put forward proposals for a new Comprehensive Rural Development Authority to plan, co-ordinate and develop designated areas in association with other Government departments and agencies. It also undertook a pre-feasibility study of the Central Lowlands of Surat Thani and Krabi — the area identified as being the most suitable in the South for such treatment(11, 28).

But ideals are seldom put into practice and the passive characteristics of Thai developmental policies make it unlikely that such an approach will be adopted. Quite apart from the vested interests of existing agencies, there are considerable political and security constraints of operating in what are usually fairly remote areas, and the heavy demands being placed on the Government's resources by the recent land reform and related legislation probably preclude another major institutional innovation. It seems inevitable therefore that a mixture of road construction programmes, spontaneous smallholder intrusion and under-capitalized public settlements will continue to characterize the process of development, and that the most that can be hoped for in the way of moving towards the ideal of co-ordinated development is some improvement in the ways that existing policies are implemented.

There are of course many improvements that could be made and possibilities were discussed in the follow-up report to the Regional Planning Study(29). For instance:

- Greater emphasis could be placed on reserving specific high priority forests rather than on the current more general reservation policies. To deliniate such areas, a regional forest and

watershed management study could be undertaken: this would complement the detailed forest management project already proposed(30).

- Land use and land monitoring studies using aerial photography and satellite imagery could be formalized in order to establish the progress of settlement and the extent to which land is still available. The Survey Department's photography programme at 1:15,000 for the purposes of cadastral survey could be rescheduled to give new areas greater priority.

- Soils and land classification studies could be undertaken to identify areas suitable for Government settlement schemes and other projects. The Land Development Department's provincial programme at detailed reconnaisance level could be given a more developmental orientation and the detailed studies along new roads greatly extended.

- Road construction programmes could be delayed or modified to reflect the results of such studies and to allow for greater time to plan and implement complementary projects.

- Additional resources could be given to the settlement planning agencies. Development and planning studies of both existing and newly identified settlements could be undertaken and could possibly lead to the involvement of international or private organizations in financing development.

- Existing programmes, such as that operated by the Rubber Replanting Aid Fund Board, could be extended to assist or finance new development — for instance within public settlement schemes.

- Crop diversification programmes could be given greater urgency, notably in the case of oil palm. The latter crop needs large contiguous areas under estate or centralized smallholder cultivation: consideration could be given to reserving land for new private/public joint ventures to supplement the existing private estate at Au Luk and the Satun settlement. Other complementary projects, for instance in infrastructure and research, could be undertaken to encourage diversification into high return crops.

While proposals such as these would go some way towards improving the situation, the momentum of past development is such that, even with the best will in the world, their impact is unlikely to be dramatic. Time is running out, resources are scarce, and the Government's attentions are — possibly rightly — more directly engaged in urgent problems elsewhere. The easy way out is to allow continued uncontrolled settlement to take place. In the shor term this is possibly the most effective — becau quickest — method of relieving population pressur in the densely populated areas. In the longer ter however, these will be made that much worse an the problems of agricultural involution will have be faced that much sooner.

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THE economic and social implications of this a fairly obvious but there may also be politic implications. It has already been suggested that som insurgency activities are related to land grabbing an the conflicts to which this gives rise. With tim however, land ownership patterns — however ineff cient — will stabilize. New towns will grow up an other things being equal, Government administratio and control will extend into these areas. Provide international prices are favourable, a relative wealthy community could emerge despite the lo levels of land productivity. Population pressure w be low and a land-owning class with relatively lar farms based on cash cropping could predominat The Central Lowlands in particular have some of th best soils in the region and this will also tend offset the effects of inefficient agriculture.

In contrast, a growing class of tenants an landless agricultural workers with little to lose w emerge in the more densely populated regions. T tradition of out-migration in search of freely-ava able land will persist without the means of satisfyi it. Higher population densities will impose great demands on the rice crop for subsistence purpos and the surplus for sale will tend to decline. Th frustrations caused by these trends, and by growi under-employment, could mean that the focus f some types of insurgency and violent discontent cou move from the interior to the coastal plains, an even to the towns where unemployment is also liab to rise. The fact that the South is relative prosperous by the standards of the other agricultur regions of Thailand is unlikely to carry much weigh with people who see their own opportunities declinin and the tradition of independence and self-sufficie cy could be reflected in growing opposition Bangkok.

Perhaps too much can be made of thes political implications. Discontent has many cause and the decline in the land surplus and increasin population pressure are only a part, albeit a critica part, of a more complex picture. Nevertheless, th trends discussed in this paper are important in the own right and bear crucially on the developmenta policies that should be applied in the region. Tha they may also have implications for the pattern o insurgency and political disaffection, only serves t emphasize the need for the authorities to take them into account, not only in South Thailand but also i other parts of the country.

Table 1 Farm cash flows(1) for seedling and clonal rubber: 15 rai

Baht per holding

Year from planting	Net cash flow: annual average	
	Seedling rubber	Clonal rubber
0	— 900	— 6,150
1	—	— 4,200
2	—	— 3,900
3	—	— 2,850
4	—	— 3,450
5	—	— 3,450
6	—	+ 8,100
7	+2,100	+11,250
8 - 12	+4,050	+16,800
13 - 17	+6,300	+21,450
18 - 22	+7,350	+20,550
23 - 25	+6,300	+14,700

1. Excluding all labour costs and assuming that fertilizer and other inputs are only used on immature clonal rubber.

Source: South Thailand Regional Planning Study, Final Report, Volume 1: Hunting Technical Services *et al*, 1974.

Table 2 Estimates of rubber plantings by year, 1904-72(1)

thousand rai(2)

Period	New plantings		Cumulative total
	Total	Average	
1904-17	109	6	109
1923-28	778	130	886
1934-41	1,824	228	2,710
1950-52	1,230	410	3,940
1955-57	1,136	379	5,076
1958-62	2,050	410	7,126
1963-70	1,260	158	8,386
1971-72	200	100	8,586

1. Including South-east Thailand, which accounts for about 10 per cent.
2. 1 hectare = 6.25 rai

Source: Rubber Research Centre: Survey of rubber growing areas, an agricultural economic study: FAO, 1973.

Table 3 Gross areas of major land use categories: South Thailand — 1973 estimates

Land use category	Northern provinces(1)	Southern provinces(2)	Regional total
			square kilometre
Forest and swamp	17,807	15,575	33,382
Rubber	5,296	12,681	17,977
Rice	1,581	7,800	9,381
Other tree crops	643	582	1,225
Mixed low intensity use	6,398	3,068	9,466
Town, village and mining	727	803	1,530
Total	32,452	40,509	72,961
			per cent of tot
Forest and swamp	54.9	38.4	45.7
Rubber	16.3	31.3	24.6
Rice	4.9	19.3	12.9
Other tree crops	2.0	1.4	1.7
Mixed low intensity use	19.7	7.6	13.0
Town, village and mining	2.2	2.0	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. Chumpon, Ranong, Phang-nga, Phuket, Krabi and Surat Thani.
2. Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Phattalung, Trang, Satun, Songkhla, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat.

Source: South Thailand Regional Planning Study: Physical environment and progress of sector studies: Hunting Technical Services *et al*, 1973.

Table 4 Distribution of holdings by type of land certificate: South Thailand

Type of certificate	Number of holdings(1) '000	Total area '000 rai	Per cent of total	
			Holdings %	Area %
Baichong	30.6	560	2.0	4.1
Sor Kor 1	1,248.7	10,245	81.6	74.0
Nor Sor 3	250.5	2,800	16.4	20.2
Title deed	n.a.	240	n.a.	1.7
Total	1,529.8(2)	13,845	100.0(2)	100.0

1. Probably including farmers with two or more certificates.
2. Excluding title deeds.

Source: Royal Thai Survey Department: National Resources Atlas, 1972.

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Erratum

In Lawrence E. Grinter's article, "South Vietnam: Pacification Denied", published in SPECTRUM Volume 3, Number 4 (July 1975), lines 33-34 of the left-hand column of page 61 should read: '...Command Vietnam (MACV). US officials cite MACV's familiarity with security in the countryside as "the indispensable first stage in pacification".'

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